

DISCOURSES

Upon the Following

Important SUBJECTS: viz.

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| I. The Excellency and
Necessity of DIVINE
REVELATION; or, the
Extent of Natural and
Revealed Religion. | | II. The great Doctrine
of the TRINITY.
III. The CREED, com-
monly called the Creed
of St <i>Athanasius</i> . |
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To which is added,

A DISCOURSE, with a SUPPLEMENT,
concerning the People called METHODISTS;
adapted to Persons of low Capacity, especially
those in Country Places.

By CHARLES UMFREVILLE, LL. B.

Vicar of *Bradfield* in *Essex*, and *Acton* in *Suffolk*.

Prove all Things; hold fast that which is good: 1 Theff. v. 21.

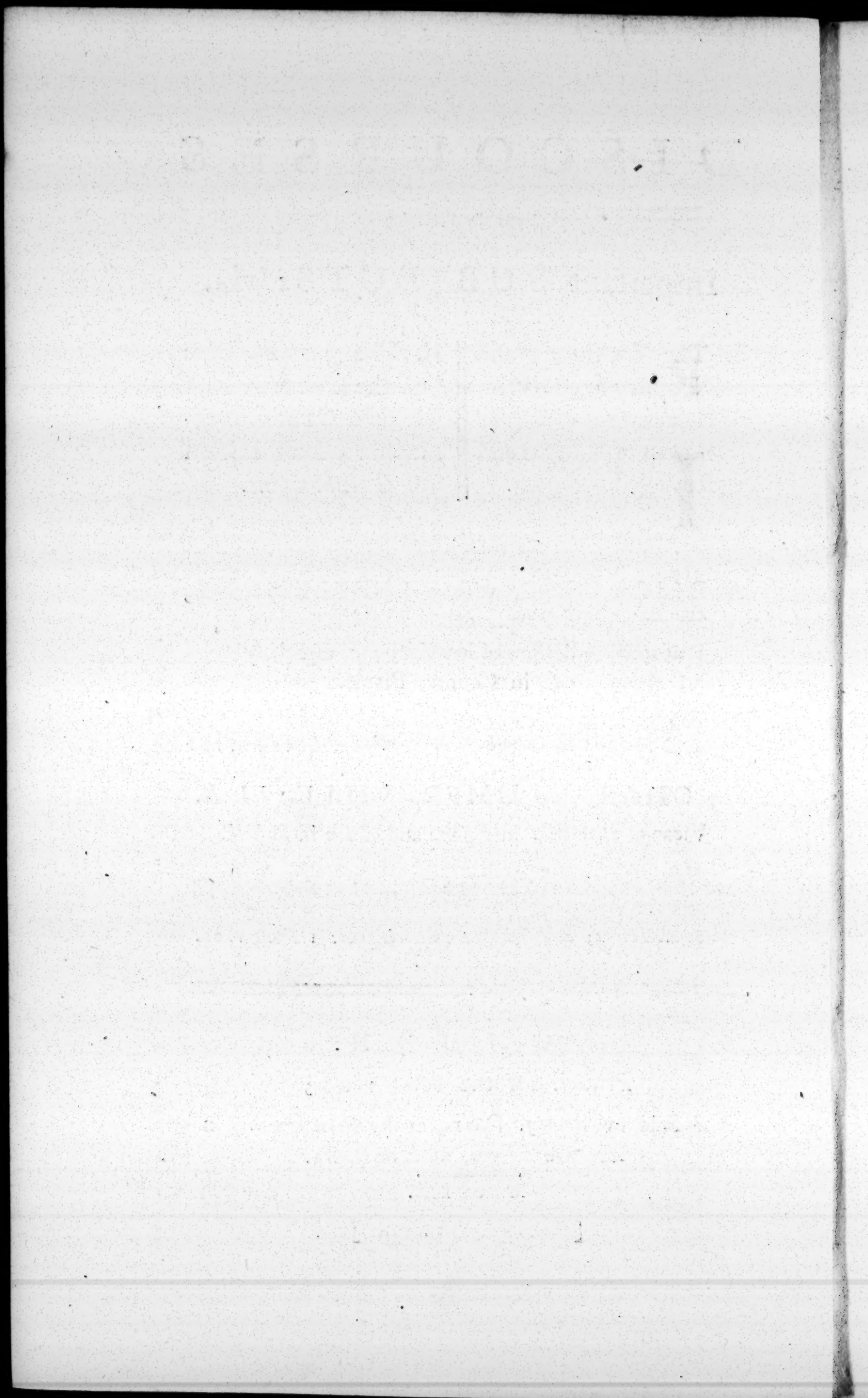
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M D C C L I X.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

IT is necessary, I think, to give some Account of the following Discourses. There have been several excellent Treatises wrote about Natural and Revealed Religion; but I do not remember to have seen any that have put these Subjects into any regular Order or Method; or have set forth the Extent of Natural and Revealed Religion in the several Parts and Branches of it in any particular Discourse; or have shewn what Natural Religion can do, and what it cannot do, and the superior Excellency of Divine Revelation above it upon all Accounts, raising and enlarging Religion to the highest Degree, beyond all that Natural Reason can possibly do. Some have extolled Natural Religion greatly beyond its due Bounds, beyond all manner of Reason; maintaining that it is sufficient for all the Purposes of Duty and Happiness. These are the Deists; who carry on their evil Designs on Purpose to prejudice Divine Revelation,

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tion, to shake that Credit and Reputation which it hath deservedly gained in the World with the more serious and considerate Part of Mankind, and to take it down from that exalted Height, where it justly, but not unenvied, stands. And yet, notwithstanding the utmost Efforts that these People have used with their Natural Reason to discredit Divine Revelation, Divine Revelation, if compared to Natural Reason in making Discoveries in the most important Concerns of Religion, is as the Sun shining in his full Strength, and Natural Reason as the faint and glimmering Light of some inferior Star. Others have wrote excellent Treatises of Natural Religion, and have said many and great Things in its Praise; but the same Persons, if they had not been acquainted with Divine Revelation, would have fallen far short of those noble Thoughts and sublime Sentiments which they have given and exhibited to us. Every Religion has its Bounds; and by what will appear in the First Discourse, you may plainly perceive how far Natural Religion can go; what it can do, and what it cannot do; and where it requires the Assistance of Divine Revelation. This Undertaking will qualify every Person that means well to understand what is Natural
and

and what is Revealed Religion, what we should attribute to the one, and what we should give to the other, and to see the Excellency and Necessity of Divine Revelation.

As to the Second Discourse, that concerning the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity: I never saw a full and compleat Discourse upon this Subject, though several Treatises have been published upon it; a Discourse on Purpose, designed to take in the several Particulars relating to it, and to answer the several Objections made against it. There have been several excellent Pieces published concerning the Divinity of our blessed Saviour, wherein many Things have been occasionally said and urged in Favour of the Doctrine of the Trinity; but I have not seen, as I have observed, though I have read several Treatises upon this Subject, a compleat and full Discourse upon this most important Doctrine. I have therefore made it my Business to compose a particular Discourse upon this Account, and to give fair and reasonable Answers to the several Objections made against this Doctrine. I have in this Discourse given Caution against any Attempt to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity, upon

the Account of the Danger of such an Enterprize, well knowing the ill Consequence of such an unreasonable and inconsistent Undertaking. I wish that some of our Divines had let their Explications alone, and not have treated of the sublime Doctrine of the Trinity in that improper Manner. When an Attempt is made to explain a Doctrine which cannot be explained, Men must not only fall into such Errors and Inconsistences as they cannot get clear of, and extricate themselves from, but must do great Disservice to the Doctrine itself. A few Years ago a Pamphlet happened to come into my Hands, intituled, *Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, by several Divines; a Pamphlet, which the Unitarians lay Stress upon, and seem to boast of; as also on the Account given by those who say, “the Trinity is an “unconceivable and inexplicable Mystery;” written to a Person of Quality, and printed in the Year 1693. In this Pamphlet the Author shews the Errors and Inconsistences, which these Divines fell into by their Explications of this mysterious Doctrine of the Trinity. One maintains, that a divine Person is only a Mode, a Respect, or Relation of God to his Creatures; this Explication, he
says,

says, will make more than Three Persons God. Another maintains by this Explication that there are Three Gods, by saying, that every distinct Person is a distinct Substance. A Third maketh One great God, and Two less Gods; or else only the First is true God, and the other Two in Name only. A Fourth saith, that the Three divine Persons are neither Substances nor Accidents, and consequently, saith he, no real Beings; or that the Three divine Persons are nothing else but the Substance of God or of the Godhead, diversified into Three Postures, or by Three Modes of Subsistence. A Fifth saith, that the Substance of God with this Property to be begotten, or to be of the Father, maketh the Person of the Son; and with this Property to proceed from both, maketh the Person of the Spirit, or of the Holy Ghost. To this Purpose the Author of the Pamphlet argues. Besides, this Notion seems to me to be too weak to build the Doctrine of the Trinity upon it, and to lay the Foundation for such a most important Concern to Mankind. It seems to make the Son and Holy Ghost to be only nominal and not real Beings, to make the Name but not the Persons of these, divine Beings. By these Explications

we see what wretched Work and terrible Confusion those People have made, who have attempted or undertaken to explain the Myfterious Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity. Such grofs Inconfistences and Contradictions should deter every Person from fuch bold and dangerous Attempts. It must be daring Prefumption, to fay no worfe of it, to pretend to explain that Doctrine, which cannot be comprehended by human Underftanding; to fearch into the Nature of the moft high and glorious God, whose Nature is immensely great and infinite, and paff finding out by created Beings. Some Men of Learning and of a philosophical Genius, who have made it their Bufinefs to enquire into the Reason of Things, meeting with Succels in their Enquiries, and being able to give a clear and fatisfactory Account of fome of the Secrets of Nature, think that there is fcarce any Thing too hard for them, too difficult to find out and explain. From hence, I am apt to think, they are spirited up to make Attempts to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity; a Doctrine, that cannot be explained by human Abilities. From hence proceed grofs Errors among learned Men, and fatal Miftakes about this fublime Myftery. I have
nothing

nothing to do with the Explications of others in this Discourse upon the Trinity ; if they have committed Mistakes in their Explications of this Doctrine, they are to themselves, they must look to them, the Blame must lie at their own Door ; they have no Relation to me, who do not pretend to explain this Doctrine, this most sublime Mystery. I have taken Scripture for my Guide, and have called in Reason to my Assistance ; which are the best Methods to decide all Controversies in Matters of Religion. The Author of the Pamphlet, which I have above mentioned, has likewise made some Objections himself to this Doctrine of the Trinity ; which, as I have never seen answered, I have taken the Pains to return proper Answers to them ; how I have succeeded I leave to the impartial and judicious Reader to determine. After this Author has made Reflections and Observations upon those, that have attempted to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity, he says, he passes to the last Sort of Trinity, the Mystical Trinity, or the Trinity of the Mobile ; that is, the Trinity of the Mob, or of the common Sort of People. “ The poor common People, says he, are first made to believe, by the Help of corrupted Copies and
“ false

“ false Translations of the Bible, that it is a
 “ Scripture-Doctrine; that there is a Tri-
 “ nity of divine Persons, an Almighty Fa-
 “ ther, an Almighty Son, and an Almighty
 “ Spirit distinct and different in Number
 “ from both Father and Son. But because
 “ this, says he, at the very first Sight ap-
 “ pears contrary to Reason and common
 “ Sense; therefore in the next Place they
 “ are told, that they must consider this Doc-
 “ trine as a Mystery, impossible indeed for
 “ us to understand, yet necessary to be be-
 “ lieved, because God hath said it.” The
 latter Part of this Passage, that we must
 consider the Doctrine of the Trinity as a
 Mystery, impossible indeed for us to under-
 stand because the Nature of God is infinite;
 and yet necessary to be believed, because God
 hath said it, because it is evidently revealed
 in the Holy Scripture; the latter Part of this
 Passage, I say, is most certainly true: It is
 what we believe ourselves, and what we
 teach others, as necessary to Salvation. It
 is an easy Thing to make Complaint, to set
 off a Subject with a pompous Concern for
 the Welfare of the common People, and to
 give out that they are greatly imposed upon;
 but it is not so easy a Thing for us to give
 reason-

reasonable Satisfaction, for some will not be satisfied with Reason, to set Things in a clear Light, and to make them have their due Weight upon the Minds of all such People, as are concerned to take Notice of them, and whose Duty it is to be influenced by them. But, I hope, I have in this Discourse given such an Account of this Mysterious Doctrine of the Trinity, as will not only induce the common People to believe it; but will be a Means to engage all those who are People of Reason, of Learning, and Understanding, and who mean well, to embrace it. The Way, that I have treated this Subject of great Importance, is the best and safest, and I think the only Way to discourse on it, and to give Satisfaction. If you treat of this Subject in this reasonable and consistent Way, in this strong and judicious Manner, which is the true and proper Way of treating it; you will maintain your Ground against all the Arians and Socinians in the World, and give such an Account of this Mysterious Doctrine as they will never be able to confute. But if you attempt to explain this Doctrine, you will give them all the Advantage against you that they can desire; and at last they will baffle you in your Under-

Undertaking, and gain their Ends and Designs upon you; by these Means the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity will suffer through your handling and treating of it. It is very proper to caution all young Divines, who are lately come from the Universities, who think that they understand almost every Thing, to be upon their Guard in treating of this most important Subject, and to avoid all manner of Explication of it. I am well aware of what great Disadvantage such a Proceeding will be to all such People, and to this sublime Doctrine. I have likewise returned Answers to several other Objections which have been made against the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity; and I hope what I have said will not only rescue this most important Doctrine out of unfaithful Hands, but will be an happy Means, by the divine Blessing, to confirm and establish those in the Faith, who now believe this divine Doctrine. In these Answers you have an Account of the chief and most material Objections made against the sacred Doctrine of the most holy Trinity, in relation to the Son of God our blessed Saviour; and some in relation to the Holy Ghost. The Substance of the two first Discourses, of that upon Natural and Revealed

vealed Religion, and the other upon the Trinity, were composed several Years ago; long before those excellent Discourses appeared in Public, which were lately published by a Prelate of our Church, and which are chiefly levelled against the Deists. And tho' I have read several Discourses upon these Subjects since that Time, yet I do not see any Occasion to make any Alteration in them upon that Account. All that I have done since is to put the first Discourse into a regular Method, with some Additions annexed to it; and to the other, I have added Answers to the Objections made against the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, and have made some Additions to make it more full and compleat.

The next Discourse that follows is upon the *Creed*, commonly called the Creed of St *Athanasius*. Numbers of People have been set against this Creed; some out of Prejudice, because it opposes and condemns those Errors which they maintain. Others out of Pride and Conceit, because they will not go in the same Way with other People, in the same common Path with the Generality of Mankind. Some again take ill Will at this Creed
by

by the Instigation and Discourse of others, who represent it to be inconsistent and contradictory, and cruel and severe to those who do not believe it: These Sort of People will not repeat this Creed when it is appointed to be read, nor join in this Part of divine Service with their Christian Brethren. And others again, who mean well and do not act out of Prejudice, but have not a right Understanding of the Creed, think that it is harsh and too strict, and that it had better have been left out of our Public Worship and Common-Prayer Book, than annexed and confined to it. And another, again, I have lately met with, who has the Insolence thus to express himself in Print; “ And now, I
 “ appeal to all Men, that have any Freedom
 “ of Judgment remaining, whether this Creed
 “ is fit to be retained in any Christian, much
 “ less Protestant and Reformed Church?
 “ Since it subverts the Foundations not only
 “ of Christianity, but of all Religion; that is
 “ to say, Reason and Revelation *.” What I have said in this Discourse will shew the Inconsistency of this rude and unjust Remark, and I hope will satisfy every unprejudiced, well-meaning, and reasonable Person about

* *Brief Notes on the Creed of Athanasius.*

this Creed ; as to such as are prejudiced and unreasonable, it is not to be expected that any Arguments will have much Influence or Effect upon them.

The last Discourse is concerning the People called *Methodists* : These People are dispersed into several Parts of the Kingdom, and are to be found in several Cities and large Towns of it ; and sometimes they make Excursions into Country Places, where meeting with little Encouragement, they do not favour the People long with their Company, but return, I am apt to think, to the Places from whence they came out ; or else retire to other Places to seek their Fortune. These People have made a great Noise in the Nation, have raised much Disturbance, and have done a great deal of Mischief and but little Good in it. They have done great Hurt both to the Bodies and Minds of Men ; by hindring them from their necessary Business, by depriving them of their Substance which should be employed for the Benefit of their Families, by impairing their Health, and by driving them to Despair ; worse Injuries cannot be done to Mankind. I am surpris'd that any People should be attached to their Party, when a
very

very little Observation will convince us all, that their chief and great Aim is to promote their own temporal Interest; and what is much to be lamented in the Case before us, they make Religion a Cloak for their evil Designs. “Seducers, says a certain Writer, “are always Self-Seekers, they are designing “Men; they aim at themselves, under a Pretence of acting for Christ and his Glory*.” What I have said in this Discourse, and the Supplement to it, will give you an Account of the Chief of their Doctrines and Practices, enough to convince you of their bad Doings; and, I hope, will be a proper Guard to defend you from their Errors and evil Designs, and from being grossly imposed upon by them. If what I have said in these Discourses shall in the least Degree promote the Glory of God and the Good of Mankind, it will be a great Pleasure and Satisfaction to me; and as I have done my Endeavour to be useful, I hope it will be well accepted by all good People.

* BURKITT, on *Rom.* xvi. 17.

THE
EXCELLENCY and NECESSITY
OF
DIVINE REVELATION, &c.

ACTS IV. 12.

Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.

THESE Words are part of that Answer which St *Peter* gave to the Rulers of the People, and the Elders of *Israel*, when they enquired by what Power, or by what Name He and *John* had made the impotent Man whole. He acquainted them that it was by the Name of *Jesus Christ* of *Nazareth*, whom they crucified, whom God raised from the Dead, that the lame Man was restored to the perfect Use of his Limbs. And then afterwards subjoins the Words of the Text; *Neither is there Salvation in any*
B *other;*

other ; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved. By which Expressions St Peter gave the Jews to understand, and us, by Parity of Reason, with them, that there is no Salvation to be had or expected but by the Name of Jesus Christ, by the Gospel-Dispensation : That there is no other Religion in the World, whether Mosaical or Natural, whereby Mankind must be saved, but only the Christian Religion. And indeed, if we seriously consider that all Mankind are Sinners, Transgressors of the Laws of God, which require perfect Obedience ; the Christian Religion, under so many Imperfections and Failures in Duty, under so many Crimes and Offences, is the only Foundation, the only Religion in the World that can afford Comfort to Mankind ; by assuring them, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, of the Pardon and Forgiveness of Sins for the Sake of Christ Jesus, for what he hath done and suffered upon our Account. Without the Christian Scheme, without Evangelical Blessedness ; there is no Safety, no Security in Relation to the Happiness of another Life. Who can, or who dare appear before the great and righteous Judge of the whole Universe, with so many Failings and Imperfections, with so many Sins and Offences about him, as every Person is guilty of, without an Interest in the
 Merits

Merits of the Son of God, the blessed Redeemer of Mankind?

In discoursing further upon the Words of the Text, I shall shew the Excellency and Necessity of Divine Revelation; or that the Gospel of Christ Jesus is the only true Way to Salvation, and that no other Religion in the World can procure the Favour of God and an happy State hereafter, but the Christian Dispensation.

In order to do this I shall shew,

First, That the Mosaical Dispensation could not procure the Pardon of Sin, and a State of Salvation and Blessedness hereafter.

Secondly, I shall shew what Natural Religion can do in the great Affair of Salvation; and the Excellency of Divine Revelation above it, even in those Points which it can make Discovery of.

Thirdly, What Natural Religion cannot do; and the great Necessity of the Divine Revelation of the Gospel to discover to us those most important Points, which greatly concern the Salvation and Happiness of Mankind.

Fourthly and lastly; I shall make some Reflections, and so conclude.

First, I shall shew that the Mosaical Dispensation could not procure the Pardon

of Sin, and a State of Blessedness hereafter.

The Law of *Moses* required strict Obedience to its Commands, which no Man could perform; and for his Transgression of the Law promised no Pardon and Forgiveness, but held every Person under the Curse; and consequently, no Salvation and Happiness hereafter could be expected from the Mosaical Dispensation: *Cursed is every one, says the Scripture, that continueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them,* Gal. iii. 10. Deut. xxvii. 26. So that as many as are of the Works of the Law, are under the Curse. The Reason of this strict Severity was no doubt to engage the People of God not to expect Salvation by the Law, but by that great Prophet that was to come into the World. There could not therefore be any such Thing as true Religion, since the Fall of Man, without a Saviour; and whatever Religion offers itself to the World without a Saviour, can never procure Salvation for Mankind. Almighty God indeed, for the Sake of his Son, till he should come into the World to offer himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of Mankind, was graciously pleased to accept of vicarious Sacrifices upon Man's Account; to accept of the Death of a Beast for the Life of a Man; upon this Account to spare Mens Lives, which by their Crimes they had forfeited to him. Which was a
very

very great Mercy to Men; because God might in Justice have required the personal Suffering of the Offender himself, and demanded his Life for every Transgression which he committed; *for the Wages of Sin is Death*, Rom. vi. 23. which Proceeding would soon have put an End to the Race of Mankind. But Almighty God, in tender Pity and Compassion to Men, and upon the Account of that most valuable Sacrifice that was to come, accepted of the Sacrifices of Beasts, to exempt the Offenders from Death and Destruction. Sacrifices were the great Law of the Jewish Religion; but if they had not been Types of the blessed Messiah, it would very much have puzzled the Jews to have found out their Worth and Value; *For it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats should take away Sins*; Heb. x. 4. there being no Relation between a Man and a Beast upon this Account, that a Beast should take away the Sin of a Man, and be made a Sacrifice for him. *By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin*; Rom. iii. 20. the Law discovers the evil Nature of Sin, forbids and condemns it; but makes no Provision for the final Discharge from the Guilt and Punishment of it; *Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in God's Sight*, Rom. iii. 20. There is no Person, that is able to perform perfect and sinless Obedience to the Law of God, by which alone he can expect to be justified; or there

is no Person, in this depraved and corrupted State we are now in, owing to the Sin of Man, but who offends against the Law of God, and therefore no Person can be saved by the Law ; because the Law requires strict Obedience, and grants no Pardon to Transgressors ; which is the unhappy Case of all Mankind, *For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*, Rom. iii. 23. And therefore the Law could not procure Salvation. I come now to shew,

Secondly, What Natural Religion can do in the great Affair of Salvation ; and the Excellency of Divine Revelation above it, even in those Points which it can make Discovery of.

Natural Reason may produce good Arguments to prove the Being of a God, and his Divine Attributes of Power, Wisdom, and Goodness ; by the wonderful Works of the Creation, and by the ample Provision of Subsistence and Well-being that is made for all Sorts of Creatures by his Divine Providence. These are prevalent and good Arguments to prove the Being and Attributes of God, and have often been made Use of with Success to this Purpose. But the Proofs which Divine Revelation affords us upon these Accounts are much superior, and much more convincing : That sacred and eminent Authority exhibits and represents to us Almighty
God

God himself speaking to his People, and discoursing to them in a free, familiar, and condescending Manner, conducting them to Safety and Happiness:—*The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect: And I will make my Covenant between me and thee, Gen. xvii. 1, 2. In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed, Gen. xxii. 18.* Divine Revelation represents the great God coming to the Assistance of his People, working Wonders for them, and delivering them out of their Troubles:—*God called unto him out of the Midst of the Bush, and said, Moses, Moses; and he said, Here am I. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the Affliction of my People who are in Egypt, and have heard their Cry, by Reason of their Task-masters; for I know their Sorrows. And I am come down to deliver them out of the Hand of the Egyptians, Exod. iii. 4, 7, 8.* The sacred Authority of Scripture sets before us God himself in Person, feeding, comforting, and relieving his Creatures. Our blessed Saviour, when he was in the World, supplied the Necessities both of Body and Mind: He forgave Men their Sins, healed their Bodies, and distributed Food to the Hungry; feeding several Thousands in a miraculous Manner, for their Comfort and Refreshment: *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father) full of Grace and Truth,*

John i. 14. *God, who at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in Time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets; hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his Son,* Heb. i. 1, 2. These Proofs give greater Assurance of the Being and Attributes of God than all the natural Arguments in the World, and far exceed all the Evidence of mere Natural Religion. Though natural Reason greatly assists Men to discover the Truth and Certainty of the Being of God, and of his infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; yet every reasonable and understanding Man must acknowledge, that it is a more convincing Proof of the Being and Attributes of God, to see God in Person displaying his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; than can possibly be produced from all the natural and moral Arguments in the World. Thus in the Affairs now before us Divine Revelation exceeds Natural Religion, even in those Points which it can make Discovery of.

2dly, Natural Reason may produce good Arguments to prove that religious Worship is due to the supreme Being, upon the Account of his superlative Perfections, the Needs and Wants of Men, and the gracious Acts of Goodness and Compassion continually extended to Mankind. But what sort or kind of Worship Almighty God would be pleased with, and would be acceptable to Him, natural Reason unassisted with Revelation, could
by

by no Means discover and point out to the World.

Natural Reason may indeed form Conjectures and Guesſes about this Worſhip; but being ignorant of the Divine Will and Pleaſure of Almighty God, who alone can determine this important Point, can never adapt ſuch a complete Method of religious Worſhip, as will be truly and fully agreeable to the divine and ſpiritual Nature of Almighty God. And therefore no Man ſurely will be ſo inconſiſtent as to affirm, that natural Reason can decide this Point ſo well, as a Déclaration of God himſelf upon this important Subject, who alone can appoint the Way of his own Worſhip; by revealing his Divine Will and Pleaſure upon this Account, what ſort of Worſhip will be moſt pleaſing and acceptable to him. I need not I think make uſe of many Words to acquaint you (ſome of whom I may reaſonably ſuppoſe to be acquainted with this Subject) what fatal and pernicious Miſtakes the Philoſophers and wiſe Men in ancient Times committed about the nature of God and his divine Worſhip. God they knew by the Works of the Creation, but they worſhipped him not as God; for Idolatry was the reigning Crime of the Nations; even the wiſeſt and greateſt of them, *Socrates* and *Plato* not excepted, fell into this dangerous Error. Though theſe wiſe Men could not come up to a complete System of religious

religious Worship, yet they might by the Assistance of natural Reason have avoided Idolatry, the worst of Crimes; especially that mean and low Idolatry, degrading the Godhead to an infamous Degree, which the Scripture justly takes Notice of, and as justly upbraids them for, *Rom. i. 22, 23.* Thus we see that natural Reason may prove that religious Worship is due to God, but it cannot discover what particular Worship will be pleasing to him. As God alone only knows what is most pleasing to him, so God alone only can determine what Worship is most pleasing and agreeable to his Divine Majesty. Divine Revelation therefore is the only Religion we can have Recourse to upon this most important Affair, the Will of God himself revealed to us, to decide this most weighty Matter. Revelation must of Necessity be introduced to give Assistance, to help the Weakness of human Reason, to enlighten it with Divine Illumination, and to discover to it this sublime and lofty Point. Almighty God appointed Sacrifices, ritual and external Performances among the Jews, agreeable to the imperfect State they were in, and to train them up to a State of Perfection. *But when the Fulness of the Time was come, Gal. iv. 4.* when the Son of God came into the World, Almighty God appointed a different Way of Worship among Christian People; a Way of Worship agreeable to that State of Perfection

tion they are in, not with carnal Ordinances and Jewish Ceremonies which were only Types and *Shadows of good Things to come*, Heb. x. 1. but in a pure spiritual Manner, more suitable to the spiritual Nature of Almighty God, that which pleases him best : And therefore Almighty God must determine the Way of his own Worship, and not natural Reason. It is unreasonable to think, that natural Reason should invade the Prerogative of God, and prescribe Rules to him, who made all Things, and gave natural Reason its Being to Mankind. We must therefore hearken to the divine Will of Almighty God revealed to us upon this most important Account. Thus Divine Revelation acquaints us, that *God is a Spirit ; and they, that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and Truth*, John iv. 24. God must be worshipped with the utmost Affection and Devotion of the Mind, joined with the most reverential external Performances of the Body ; which Divine Revelation fully acquaints us with. This is a Worship which is justly due to the most High God, agreeable to his divine and spiritual Nature, and best becomes the Dignity of human Beings : Nothing less than God ought to be worshipped by Men, by reasonable and religious Creatures. These are the Worshipers, *which the Father seeketh to worship him ;* John iv. 23. true, spiritual, affectionate, and devout Worshipers. Thus
again

again we see in the Case before us, that Divine Revelation excels Natural Religion, even in an Affair which it can make some Discovery of.

3^{dly}, Natural Reason may shew the Difference between Good and Evil, and may prove the Excellency of Virtue, and the Deformity of Vice; by considering the Usefulness of Virtue for all the good Purposes of Life, and the Hurtfulness of Vice in every Instance of human Conduct and Behaviour. But the Extent of Virtue and Vice, how far they reach, natural Reason unassisted cannot arrive at. Natural Reason may approve Virtues, and condemn Vices; but in a corrupted State it cannot discover that Forgiveness of Injuries, loving of Enemies, *laying down our Lives for the Brethren*, 1 John iii. 10. Poverty of Spirit, Humility and Meekness, Mortification and Self-denial, are Virtues; nor that evil Thoughts and bad Desires, the irregular Motions of the Heart, are Vices. This is what one of the greatest of Men acquaints us with; *I had not known Sin, says he, but by the Law; for I had not known Lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet: Rom. vii. 7.* The Law of God not only condemns the outward evil Action, but the inward wicked Thoughts, the Motions and Inclinations of the Heart to Evil; these are the best Means to restrain Vice, by stopping the Fountain of all Evil and Wickedness. It is therefore Revelation

velation alone that can inform us of these most important Affairs. It may not here be improper to observe, what great Mistakes the ancient Philosophers and wise Men laboured under concerning Virtue and Vice; they embraced and contended for such Errors as are inconsistent with a reasonable Morality. I mention these Things to shew what a vicious Set of People most of these Philosophers were, whom the Deists so much extol, and desire that their Souls may be with the Souls of these Philosophers. These Philosophers talked a great deal of Virtue, but contended for and practised the worst of Vices; such as Fornication, Incest, Self-murder, Stealing and Robbery, Adultery and Sodomy; besides other vile and scandalous Crimes of the Heathen in private, such as Gluttony and Drunkenness, in their Mysteries after their Sacrifices; which the Scripture takes Notice of, and represents too shameful to be mentioned: *It is a Shame even to speak of those Things, which are done of them in secret*: Eph. v. 12. As to Fornication, that was generally not looked upon as a Crime in the ancient Heathen World*; but it was esteemed lawful for single People, such as were not engaged in Marriage, to make use of Women that exposed themselves for Gain, and made Sale

* Non est flagitium, mihi crede, Adolescentulum scortari.— Teren. Adelph. Act. 1. Scen. 2. lin. 21. In usum Delphini.

Sale of their Bodies. Notwithstanding the Practice of the Heathen World, I beg Leave to observe that Fornication, as anciently understood, and as it is now practised either for Gain, or by mutual Consent without Gain, is contrary to natural Reason. It is contrary to moral Honesty, to Chasteness and Modesty, to Decency and good Order, which ought to be carefully kept up and preserved among Mankind: And it is attended with several ill Consequences; it creates such Disturbance, Confusion, and Uneasiness in human Life, as are greatly prejudicial to human Society; which Things ought industriously to be avoided. Incest is another Crime, which was commonly practised in the Heathen World, and not esteemed or looked upon to be any Sin. This Crime consists in the Marriage of a Relation too near allied either by Blood or Affinity, and is condemned by the Law of Nature, because it confounds natural Duties. A Man for Example cannot in Nature and Reason be married to his Mother: The Duty, which a Man owes his Mother, is Submission and Obedience; but if he is married to his Mother, his Mother then becoming his Wife, by the Law of Marriage she must be submissive and obedient to him: Which Instance is not only Confusion of natural Duty, but likewise of natural Relation. The same Rule will hold good, and
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may be safely observed in other Instances of too near Relation. Self-murder is another Crime, which was frequently practised by the ancient Heathen, esteemed lawful by them, and which they seemed to glory in; there are several Instances of People, both among the Greeks and Romans, who upon some particular but not justifiable Occasions, have put an End to their own Lives. This Crime among the ancient Heathen was esteemed a brave and honourable Action; the famous Poet *Horace* calls Self-murder, in regard to *Cato*, *nobile Lethum*, a noble Death. But with due respect for so great a Man; it would in my Opinion have been a more noble Thing for *Cato* to have lived to have courageously sustained his Troubles, and valiantly to have fought his Way through them; than through Pride and Impatience meanly to have submitted, and been overcome by them; to sink under the Misfortunes and Calamities of Life. I shall not trouble you with the Arguments for or against Self-murder, which have been made use of upon these Accounts; but shall only observe that it is a Crime, which a Man commits immediately against himself, against the great Law of Self-preservation, against his own Nature; natural Inclination being desirous to live; and a Crime, which Men can never repent of; which is a most dreadful Consideration to all Christian People,
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who fully know, if they are not wilfully ignorant, what God and Religion mean. It is not Courage in this Case, where Pride and Impatience are concerned, to overcome natural Inclination: It is the Excess of Wickedness and Impiety. A Man to overcome his natural Inclinations, where God and Religion are concerned, where it is his Duty and Happiness to exert himself, is a most noble and virtuous Action; worthy the Imitation of all wise and good Men: But to overcome natural Inclination, where Happiness and Safety lie at Stake and are in Danger, is Folly, Vice, and Iniquity. Stealing and Robbery were allowed by some of the ancient Heathen, and not accounted any Crimes; their Laws gave Encouragement to such base and dishonest Practices, though they were greatly detrimental to Society, and created great Trouble and Disorder to human Life. Adultery was another Crime, which the ancient Heathen allowed of: This Crime is of an heinous Nature, is very prejudicial to Mankind, and raises such Rage and Resentment as cannot easily be pacified. Sodomy, though one of the worst of Vices, was esteemed a Thing of an indifferent Nature among the Heathen; their wise Men and Philosophers were much addicted to it. And as base as this Vice is, one of their Moralists apologizes for it upon the Account of the Philosophers, and seems to excuse them, because

because they made Amends by the improving of their Minds for the Corruption of their Bodies. If it was lawful to appear an Advocate in so bad a Cause as Vice, something perhaps might be alledged to mitigate the Evil of some Vices: But Sodomy is such a Monster in the World, as no Apology can be made, no Defence can be offered, no Excuse can be urged in its Favour, but stands condemned by the Laws both of God and Man, and by the alarming Voice of all Nature. It is an unnatural Filthiness, a Crime contrary to all Manner of Reason, contrary to the Order of Nature itself, and renders Men more brutish than the Beasts that perish. As Sodomy is one of the worst of Vices, so those who are guilty of it are the worst of Wretches, the most loose and corrupted Part of Mankind. It should therefore be the Business of every Person, who knows of such horrid Wickedness, to make Discovery of it, in order to bring the Perpetrators to condign Punishment. And this they should do out of Duty to God, and in regard to the Welfare of their Country; that they may hinder the Judgments of God from falling upon the People; which, without due Punishment of the Offenders, may justly be inflicted upon them. These with some other Vices were not only practised by the Heathen World, but were encouraged and allowed by them; but these Crimes revealed

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Religion

Religion will not so much as endure; it is so far from allowing these wicked Actions, that it will not suffer them to be so much as named with any Approbation among Christian People: *But Fornication, and all Unclean-ness, or Covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints*, Eph. v. 3. Here again we see the Excellency of Divine Revelation above natural Reason; which not only condemns the inward evil Thoughts, the outward evil Action, but enjoins us to *abstain from all Appearance of Evil*; 1 Theff. v. 22. and to *practise every divine Grace and Virtue*: 2 Pet. i. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11. Tit. ii. 11, 12, 14. Divine Revelation not only sets us right in the Extent, but in the Nature of Virtue and Vice; laying down the Rules of Morality much more fully and exactly, with greater Certainty than ever natural Reason could possibly do: *Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report; if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things*: Phil. iv. 8. *Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God*: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Under
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the divine Dispensation of the Gospel, we are entirely safe in every Respect.

4thly, Natural Reason may produce good Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul, which may be sufficient to convince reasonable and unprejudiced People; but it can never arrive to absolute Certainty in this great and important Affair, and remove all Scruples and Doubts about it.

Natural Reason may prove the Immortality of the Soul from its Immateriality; it may prove thereby that the Soul cannot die as the Body dies, because it is of a different Frame and Nature from the Body; the one being spiritual and intellectual, the other material; and therefore, that which destroys the Body, cannot hurt the Soul. Fire, Water, Sword, Pestilence and Famine, Accidents and Sicknefs, may affect and kill the Body by the Separation of its Parts; but they cannot hurt the Soul, touch the Mind, nor destroy the Thoughts; because the Soul, being immaterial, has no Extension, no Parts, and therefore cannot be dissolved as the Body is. Upon which Account it is very reasonable to conclude, that the one may exist and have a Being, when the other dies; and therefore the Soul may survive the Body, and live without it after its Death. This is a good natural Argument for the Immortality of the Soul, a good Security against a natural Death and Dissolution, and

might give well-meaning Men, even under the Influence of natural Religion, pleasing Hopes of a future State, of another Life after this where the Soul might exist for ever. But excuse me if I say it, there is no absolute Certainty in the Argument, there is great Probability, strong Presumption well grounded, which powerfully persuade to the Belief of this important Affair; but there is no certain Assurance to remove all Scruples and Doubts about it. Almighty God may, if he pleases, annihilate the Soul; he can as easily reduce it to nothing, as he brought it into Being; or can make it cease to exist, as he made it to live, move, and have its Being from himself. All created Beings have a dependent Existence upon God, and therefore subsist by his divine Will and Pleasure. God alone has necessary Existence, he alone is by Nature immortal; *who only*, as the Scripture informs us, *both Immortality*; 1 Tim. vi. 16. who therefore can never cease to be, nor ever have an End put to his own Being. But as to the Souls of Men, they are not in this Sense by Nature immortal, they have only a dependent Existence; if God pleases, they may be reduced to nothing, or he may make them cease to be; they have not been eternally, and they may be no more. There was a Time when the Souls of Men had no Being, and there may be a Time again when they may not exist. The Souls of Men do
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not necessarily exist, and therefore they may not exist for ever; they do not exist independent of God, but by his Will and Pleasure; and therefore that God will for ever continue them in Being can be learnt only from himself, from his divine Will revealed to Mankind. All the natural Reason in the World can never prove the Certainty of this great Point. Nothing but Divine Revelation can give us Assurance, and deliver us from Uncertainty in this most important Concern. To this Purpose revealed Religion gives us Information; *I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand:* John x. 28. and in several other Places of Scripture, *John* iii. 16. *1 Tim.* iv. 8. *Tit.* i. 2. This sacred and divine Authority gives us absolute Certainty in this most important Affair, and is more satisfactory than Thousands of natural Arguments; this entirely removes all Scruples and Doubts, and puts an End to all Manner of Disputes about it. We need not concern ourselves with the natural Frame or Make of the Soul, or how it is in a lower Sense by Nature immortal; if Almighty God, infinitely faithful and eternal, who gave us our Being, acquaints us that we shall live for ever; we shall certainly live for ever, and there is no Room to doubt of the Truth of this most important Affair; a Point, which natural Religion cannot demonstrate by natural Arguments

the Truth and Certainty of. So that though natural Religion cannot give us certain Assurance of the Immortality of the Soul, yet Divine Revelation puts this great Point past all Manner of Doubt. Divine Assurance, where there are both Power and Faithfulness to perform, far exceeds all the natural Arguments in the World, and is much superior to all Manner of Conjectures, Probability, and strong Presumption about the Immortality of the Soul. If therefore we rely upon the divine Promise of Almighty God, who is infinitely good, infinitely powerful, and infinitely faithful and true; we are everlastingly secure, and may rest entirely easy and satisfied in our own Minds about that eternal Life and Happiness which is promised to the Faithful and Obedient. Here again we see the Excellency of Divine Revelation above natural Reason, in giving us certain Assurance of the Immortality of the Soul and another Life; which natural Reason could never arrive at, nor could ever pretend to acquaint us with.

5thly, Natural Reason may produce good Arguments to convince Men of a future State of Rewards and Punishments in another World, and to prove to them that they shall there be happy or miserable according to their Deserts; but it can never fix these Points upon a certain and sure Foundation.

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The Justice and Providence of God, in rewarding good Men and punishing the Bad, may be produced to this Purpose. As good Men are not always rewarded for their Virtue in this Life, nor bad Men here receive the due Punishment of their Iniquity ; so the Justice, Goodness, and Providence of God seem concerned in this Affair to set these Things right. And therefore, according to the Principles of Reason, it seems very probable, that there should be another Life after this, in which the Good shall be rewarded, and the Wicked punished according to their Deeds. These seem good Arguments, and well adapted to the Case ; but they do not amount to certain and full Proof. It seems unaccountable that Almighty God should reward the short and imperfect Services of Men, all of whom are Sinners, with a State of everlasting Bliss and Happiness in another Life ; and punish temporal Vice and Wickedness with a State of eternal Misery : These are Points, which, if duly considered, natural Reason, without the Assistance of Divine Revelation, can no Ways digest, nor account for ; notwithstanding that natural Religion is by some People so much extolled, even to the Prejudice of revealed Religion itself. Whatever good Arguments there may be for a future State of Rewards and Punishments in another World, according to the Principles of natural Reason, there is no Certainty, no Assurance ;

ance; probable they may be, but they do not amount to full Proof, removing all Doubts, Scruples, and Disputes about them. Here therefore again Divine Revelation must be called in for Assistance, to give us Certainty and Assurance in so momentous an Affair. Upon this Account the divine Authority of Revelation thus expresses itself;—*Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come:* 1 Tim. iv. 8. Every reasonable and unprejudiced Person will allow, that a divine Promise of a Life to come far exceeds the utmost Conjectures and Probabilities about this future State. Conjectures and Probabilities are liable to various Disputes, to different Sentiments and Opinions; but a divine and infallible Promise delivers from all Manner of Uncertainty, and will admit of no Doubt nor Dispute at all; affording the greatest Satisfaction to the Mind imaginable. Here again we see the Excellency of Divine Revelation above natural Reason, even in those Points which it can make some Discovery of.

As to God's rewarding the short and imperfect Services of Men, all of whom are Sinners, with a State of everlasting Bliss and Happiness in another Life; and punishing temporal Vice and Wickedness with a State of eternal Misery, which natural Reason can give no Account of, and which are the great
Motives

Motives to Duty and Obedience, Divine Revelation justly and truly Accounts for it. That acquaints us, that Almighty God, in Consideration of the Death and Obedience of his own Son, for the sinful Race of Mankind, a Person of such surpassing Worth and Merit, of infinite Desert, will be graciously pleased not only to pardon our Sins, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, but will for his Sake accept our sincere imperfect Services as perfect, and amply reward them. And that in Consideration of the great Things that Christ Jesus hath done for us, and the mighty Salvation he hath wrought for Mankind, the great Aids and Assistance of the Gospel, the many Privileges and Benefits of it, the surpassing Excellence of the Christian Religion, and the only Remedy to save Men from Ruin and Destruction; upon these Accounts Almighty God has threatened to punish temporal Vice and Wickedness, Disobedience to the gracious Dispensation of the Gospel of his Son, with a State of eternal Misery. If Men will not be prevailed upon to practise their Duty by the Gospel of God, by the Advantage of so much Light, Help, Aid, and Assistance, by the surpassing Dignity of the Person speaking to them, and upon the Account of such great Things done for their Salvation; they must suffer for their Folly, and blame themselves for their perverse Iniquity and heinous Contempt. And
therefore

therefore we may say to ourselves in the Language of Divine Revelation; *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation—?* Heb. ii. 3.

We have now seen how far natural Religion can go, and what it can do in the great Affair of Salvation; we have likewise seen the Excellency of Divine Revelation above it, even in those Points which it can in some Measure discover to us. Whatever some Men may think about the Excellency of natural Religion, it can never, without the Assistance of Divine Revelation, without a Saviour, carry them to Heaven and eternal Happiness. Natural Religion can go but a little Way to put Men into a State of Salvation; it cannot discover those sublime Points which are absolutely necessary to this Purpose. Natural Religion is natural Reason exercised about the Works of Creation and Providence, to find out the Author of Nature and Man's Duty to him, with the Knowledge of himself and his own Happiness, without any Assistance from Divine Revelation: But here natural Reason left to itself, in this State of Imperfection, owing to the Sin of Mankind, which has greatly obscured and darkened natural Reason, must be under great Uncertainties, and can only form in some Cases probable Conjectures of Things; and in others can have no Knowledge about them. But Divine Revelation is the divine Will and Pleasure of God himself, made known

known to Mankind; which contains absolute Certainty and Assurance, and has made ample Discovery of all Things necessary to Salvation, and to the Happiness of Man. I come now to shew,

Thirdly, What Natural Religion cannot do; and the great Necessity of the Divine Revelation of the Gospel to discover to us those most important Points, which greatly concern the Salvation and Happiness of Mankind.

As therefore to those other important Points of Religion, which greatly concern the Happiness of Mankind, and without which they cannot expect the Favour of God, and Salvation hereafter; natural Religion of itself can have nothing to do with them, nor can concern itself about them; they being far out of its Reach. As,

1st, Reconciliation with God, and the Pardon of Sin.

2^{dly}, Divine Aid and Assistance to enable Men to perform their Duty in this frail and sinful State.

3^{dly}, The Resurrection of the Body; that both Soul and Body, the complete Man, may be made completely happy in another World.

These are Points which are absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Mankind, without which they cannot be happy, and which entirely

tirely belong to Divine Revelation ; without whose Aid and Assistance natural Reason can have no Knowledge of them, nor any Information about them.

1st, Reconciliation with God, and the Pardon of Sin.

These are absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Mankind ; Man is now in a sinful State, in a State of Disobedience against God ; and therefore if God is not reconciled to him, and his Sins forgiven before he leaves this State, there can be no Hope of Happiness hereafter. That God will be reconciled to Man, or upon what Terms he will be reconciled to him, natural Reason can have no Knowledge of ; this great Affair can only be known to God himself ; and therefore if God does not reveal it, it can never be known ; *for as no Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man which is in him ; even so the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. ii. 11.* Conjectures about this most important Concern are to no Manner of Purpose at all. The Duties of natural Religion are frequently transgressed, and no Reparation is made for Transgressions ; Transgression of Duty can be no Means of Reconciliation. Application to the Goodness of God can be of no Benefit in this Case ; because God is Just as well as Good ; if he is infinitely Good, he is infinitely Just. His Goodness may incline him to Mercy, but his Justice,

Justice, which is due to his own Dignity, requires Vengeance to be taken upon Sinners, the unhappy Condition of all Mankind, for transgressing his just and righteous Laws: And therefore, till his Justice is satisfied, his Goodness cannot display itself in a sinful and disobedient State. If God's Justice is not satisfied for the Sins of Mankind, which Point natural Religion can never discover; then there can be no Room for Mercy, and consequently no Salvation and Happiness hereafter. Then every Sinner, which is the miserable Case of all human Beings, conscious to himself of his many Sins and Offences against a strictly just and holy God, must despair of Reconciliation, of Pardon and Forgiveness, and must give himself over for lost and undone. This is the miserable State and Condition of all those that rely upon natural Religion, without the Benefit, Aid, and Assistance of Divine Revelation. But by the Scheme of Divine Revelation, by the Christian Scheme, by the sufferings and perfect Obedience of the Son of God; by his most valuable Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, whereby God's Justice is fully satisfied, God is fully reconciled to Mankind, his Goodness most gloriously displays itself, and we may come boldly to the Throne of Grace and Mercy, and always find Help in Time of Need. If Man had never sinned, Goodness and Justice might then indeed have most gloriously

riously displayed themselves ; but as Man is in a sinful State, and that through his own Fault, natural Reason can never reconcile the Goodness and Justice of God. In a State of Perfection Goodness may exert itself, and Justice cannot contradict it, or put in any Claim against it, but must act in Conjunction with it ; because in a State of Perfection, it would be just in God to be good to good Men : But it is otherwise in a State of Sin and Imperfection ; then Justice must exert itself, and put in Plea against Goodness. As Man is therefore in a sinful State, natural Reason can never reconcile the Goodness and Justice of God. That the Goodness and Justice of God are reconciled is entirely a Point of Divine Revelation ; what human Reason, by the bare Light of Nature, could never discover. By Divine Revelation we are acquainted that Almighty God was *reconciled to sinful Man by the Death of his Son*, Rom. v. 10. He, by his perfect Obedience and Sufferings, by his Death and Sacrifice for us, by the infinite Worthiness of his Merits, has fully satisfied the Justice of God for the Sins of Mankind, for the Breach of the divine Laws, and hath completely answered all Demands. Upon which Accounts there is Room for Mercy ; divine Justice being thus fully satisfied, the divine Goodness may display itself in the most extensive Manner imaginable. But without such a divine Person,
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such a most valuable Sacrifice, without One mighty to save, this great Point could not be gained, this great Difference in the divine Attributes of Justice and Goodness could not be reconciled; the Consequence of which would have been, that Men must for ever have lain under the divine Vengeance of Almighty God, under his strict Justice for their Sins and Transgressions. But, comfortable to be related ! God is reconciled to Mankind by the Death of his Son, by the Shedding of his most precious Blood ; a Mystery, that natural Religion could never discover, but fully made known by Divine Revelation. The Blood of the Son of God speaks better Things than that of *Abel* ; the Blood of *Abel* called aloud for Vengeance, but the Blood of the Son of God, of the blessed Jesus, strongly pleads for Reconciliation and Acceptance, for Mercy and Forgiveness. Though Almighty God greatly disliked human Sacrifices, and would not suffer them to be offered by his People ; yet he was greatly pleased with the Intention of *Abraham* in offering up his Son *Isaac*, Gen. xxii. The Reason no Doubt was, that God was greatly pleased with the Death of his own Son, his only Son whom he loved, for the Salvation of Mankind ; who thereby, through his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, brought the greatest Good to the World from the greatest Evil that could be committed. And therefore
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though Almighty God dislikes Murder and all Acts of Cruelty and Want of Compassion, yet he suffered the Death of his own Son and the Cruelty attending it, for the accomplishing so great a Good as the Redemption of Mankind. O the surprising Goodness and wonderful Love of God to the Children of Men! By Divine Revelation we are not only acquainted that Almighty God is reconciled to Men, but upon what Terms he was reconciled to them, what Sacrifice he was pleased to accept to appease his Anger, to satisfy his Justice; even the Sacrifice of his own Son, his perfect Obedience and meritorious Sufferings for the Sins of Mankind. That God would be reconciled to Mankind by the Death of his Son, could only be known to himself; it is such an amazing Act of Compassion, Mercy, and Goodness, as could never have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive; such an amazing Act, as natural Reason could never discover, nor could ever so much as form any Conjecture about it. There must be something of the vastest Importance imaginable in the Salvation of Mankind; when the Son of God himself, *the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, Heb. i. 3. must be their Saviour, must die to redeem them, and reconcile them to God. Of all Mysteries it is one of the greatest; the more we consider this most wonderful Love, this most astonishing Affair; the more we are

are amazed, confounded, and surpris'd. Nothing therefore less than his most precious Sacrifice could save Men from Ruin. If Christ Jesus had not suffer'd Death for Mankind, we had been devoted to Misery and Destruction. The Sins of the World were too great a Weight for Angels to bear, they could not support it; the whole Creation join'd together could not make Atonement for the Sins of Mankind; none could stand under this heavy Burden, but the Son of God; and neither could He as mere Man, but only as God-Man; as being supported by the infinite Power and Worthiness of the Deity. It was therefore the Divinity of our blessed Saviour that made his Death so valuable a Sacrifice for us, and that he is such a great and mighty Deliverer; one, who hath made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction to Almighty God for the Sins of the whole World. But if Christ Jesus is only Man and not God, only a mere Creature, he could never have merited Salvation for Mankind, nor could have procur'd the Pardon and Forgiveness of Mens Sins, the Sins of a whole rebellious Race. Some are of Opinion, that Almighty God might have sav'd Mankind by other Means than by the coming of his own Son into the World, by taking our Nature upon him, and dying for us. Whatever Almighty God does is certainly best, and the Methods he makes use

of are most proper, and the only effectual Means to the Purpose. If therefore Almighty God gave his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of Men, as the Scripture asserts that he did; *John* iii. 16. then this was the most proper Method to save Men, and the only effectual Means to the Purpose; and consequently no other Means would have been sufficient for the Salvation of Mankind. No one was found worthy to be the Saviour of Men, but only the Son of God: *No Man in Heaven, as we have it in the Book of the Revelations, nor in the Earth, neither under the Earth, was able to open the Book, neither to look thereon: None but the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven Seals thereof: Rev. v. 3, 5.* Whoever therefore was to undertake the Salvation of Mankind, must be more than Man, no less than God; and therefore no other Being could redeem Mankind. A mere Creature could never merit Salvation for the World: It is enough for a Creature, though even an Angel, to preserve its Innocence, its own happy State; it has not Virtue enough to merit for others, and to reconcile sinful Creatures to an offended Deity. Much less has Man Ability, Worth, and Merit to execute so great a Work. Man, being the Party offending, and having forfeited his Life by his Transgression, cannot be a Sacrifice to expiate for Sin, to satisfy the Justice of
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of God, to appease his Anger for the Crimes of Mankind. There must be therefore some divine Person perfectly pure and holy to undertake to redeem Men, to die for their Sins, to reconcile Almighty God to Sinners, to procure Salvation for them ; or else all Mankind must perish, must lie under the divine Vengeance, the strict and severe Justice of God for their Transgressions. The Scripture acquaints us, that *the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*, Luke xix. 10. It seems therefore to follow, that if *the Son of Man* had not come to seek and to save that which was lost, that which was lost would have perished and have been lost for ever. I am therefore inclined to think, that no other Method could have been effectual for the Salvation of Mankind, but the Death and Sacrifice of God's own Son. Almighty God therefore had in View most glorious Designs, and the greatest Good for the World, when he gave his own Son to die for Men, and to be made a Sacrifice for them. God must have had an immense Love for Mankind, when he gave his only begotten Son to save and redeem them. If we think seriously with ourselves, we must conclude, that if any other Method could have been effectual for the Salvation of Mankind, it would have been made use of ; but as no other Method was made use of by infinite Wisdom and Goodness, we must conclude that no other

Method could be effectual to the Purpose, but only this of God's giving his own Son to die for the Sins of the World. The Law of *Moses*, upon the Account of Reconciliation, appointed the Sacrifices of Beasts, which could never *take away Sins*, Heb. x. 4. nor would ever have been accepted by Almighty God, but upon the Account of the most valuable Sacrifice of his Son. The Heathen likewise made use of the Sacrifices of Beasts, which no Doubt they learnt and received from God's People, and practised in Imitation of them. The Sacrifices of Beasts were not practised upon the Account of natural Reason; because there is no natural Reason in the World that can be given, why the Sacrifice of a Beast should take away the Sin of a Man, or could be any Means to reconcile a sinful Man to the offended Deity; there being no Manner of natural Relation between a Man and a Beast upon this Account; and therefore the Sacrifices of Beasts could not be any Part of natural Religion. They must then be grounded upon divine Institution; because Reconciliation with God, and the Pardon of Sin, being Concerns of mere Grace and Favour from Almighty God; the Means to convey and procure these divine Blessings must be appointed by God himself. How ineffectual the Sacrifices of Beasts, without a divine Command, would be to the Purpose, I leave to the Consideration of every reasonable

able and understanding Man ! No Religion therefore in the World can give us Satisfaction about the divine Reconciliation, but only revealed Religion, especially the Gospel of Christ Jesus, the Divine Revelation of God's own Son.

As to Pardon of Sin, the Consequence of God's Reconciliation with Mankind, this is absolutely necessary to their Salvation and Happiness. Men cannot in Reason expect to be happy hereafter, as they are here in a sinful State, except their Sins are forgiven. To die in their Sins is to die under the Displeasure of God, under his Wrath and Anger; under the Power and Guilt of Sin, in the broad Road to Ruin and Destruction. That Almighty God will pardon all Manner of Sins of all Mankind, frequently repeated against his just and righteous Laws, upon the Account only of bare Sorrow and Concern for human Transgressions, without any Vindication of his divine Authority and Government over Men; or that he will accept of imperfect instead of perfect Obedience, which all Religion, as well natural as revealed, strictly requires: These are Points which natural Religion can never discover, nor can ever have any Knowledge of. There then can be no Assurance from natural Religion that the Justice of God will not punish for frequent Transgressions, and will not take Vengeance upon Men for their many Sins;

or that the divine Goodness will pardon and forgive repeated Provocations without any proper Satisfaction made for them. Repentance therefore can be of no Service upon this important Occasion: Sorrow and Concern for Sin are not Obedience, nor any Recompence to the Honour and Justice of God for Disobedience and Transgression, for the Breach of his Laws; without which Recompence there can be no Place for Repentance, and consequently no Room for Pardon. Strict Obedience destroys the very Nature of Repentance, and will not suffer it to have any Place among Men who transgress their Duty; because Repentance necessarily implies Transgression, and Transgression as necessarily implies Disobedience; so that Repentance under natural Religion, where there are frequent Disobedience and Transgressions, and no Recompence made to the Justice of God for the Sins of Men, can be of no Benefit and Service to Mankind, who are all in a State of Sin and Disobedience. But as a sufficient Recompence has been made to Almighty God by his own Son, a Person of infinite Worth and Merit; as he has by his perfect Obedience and most valuable sufferings fully satisfied the Justice of God for the Sins of Mankind; as he has thereby established his Government in the World, vindicated the Righteousness of his Laws, and secured his divine Honour and Authority over Man: Which
Points

Points natural Reason could never discover, nor could ever by its own Sagacity and Wisdom have any Knowledge of: As these Things are thus, and this is the Case; so Divine Revelation, to which we are greatly beholden, points out Repentance as the proper Means for Pardon and Forgiveness, the only Method for sinful Men to gain the divine Favour, to recover the Love and Friendship of God. To this Purpose Divine Revelation acquaints us; *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts iii. 19. Blessed be God, sincere Repentance, under the Gospel of God's own Son and for his Sake, upon the Account of the most valuable Sacrifice of his Death for us, washes away the Guilt of all our Sins, blots out all our Iniquities, frees us from all Stains, delivers us from the Agonies of a troubled Mind, reconciles us to God, procures our Pardon, and makes an happy Way for us to escape the Wrath to come. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins*, Ephes. i. 7. But if Christ's Blood had not been shed, there had been no Redemption, consequently no Forgiveness; and therefore Repentance can be of no Benefit under mere natural Religion, of no Benefit without a Saviour; because the Justice of God had not then been satisfied, and consequently his Goodness could not display itself, nor shew Compassion upon Sinners though they repented and were sorry for their Sins.

So that if Christ Jesus had not died for Mankind, to satisfy the Justice of God for their Sins, all the Repentance in the World would have signified nothing, nor could have reconciled Almighty God to us, nor procured our Pardon. We should have been in the same unhappy Condition with the fallen Angels, who had no Saviour provided for them to satisfy God's Justice, and who therefore perished in their Rebellion against God. Upon which Account Repentance is a Doctrine, which seems to me to belong not to natural Religion, but to Divine Revelation. By the Death and Sufferings of the Son of God, by his meritorious Obedience and Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, whereby God's Justice is fully satisfied, which natural Religion can have no Knowledge of, but can only be known by Divine Revelation, Almighty God is graciously pleased to accept of Repentance, sincere instead of perfect Obedience, and upon these Accounts to grant Men Pardon for all Offences: He now looks upon Men not as innocent and free from Sin, but as pardoned and purified Sinners, washed in the Blood of his own Son, and reconciled to him for the Sake of Christ Jesus, our blessed Redeemer; which merciful Terms are the blessed Means to put all Mankind into a State of Salvation and Happiness; *the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all; and with his Stripes we are healed: Isai. liii. 5, 6.* By the Death
and

and Sufferings of the Son of God, Almighty God hath shewn his fiercest Anger against Sin, laid his greatest Vengeance upon it; and yet at the same Time hath given the highest Demonstration of his Goodness in saving Sinners, in pardoning their Transgressions; of his great Love and Compassion to Mankind. The Justice of God being satisfied by the perfect Obedience and Death of his Son, and all Demands fully answered; who thereby having offered a most valuable Sacrifice for the Sins of Mankind, and made an Atonement for them; Mercy must on Course display itself, and Pardon be procured. Justice indeed must first be satisfied, before Goodness can display itself in a State of Sin and Disobedience; but when Justice is satisfied, Goodness may display itself in the most ample and glorious Manner imaginable. Blessed therefore be God, that he hath been graciously pleased, out of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, to find out a Method to satisfy his Justice: We may therefore truly say to ourselves in the Language of Divine Revelation; *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* Rom. xi. 33. The Justice of God must preceed his Mercy, and Mercy must come after Justice; because Justice has Relation to the Commission of the Crime, and Mercy to the Forgiveness of the Crime committed; and there-

therefore Justice must take Place before Mercy, because in the Order and Course of Things Justice is concerned with the Commission of the Crime which it takes immediate Notice of, and Mercy comes after to avert the Punishment due to it. The Crime must first be committed, before the Punishment can be taken into Consideration; either as to its Execution, or to the Remission of it. As soon as a Crime is committed, so soon is Justice concerned in the Affair; and without the Mercy of God, for the Sake of Christ Jesus, who has fully satisfied all the Demands of Justice, it might have executed immediate Vengeance upon the Head of the Offender. That the Justice of God does not now exert itself, but Mercy interposes and prevails, is owing to the most valuable Satisfaction which the Son of God, by his Obedience and Death, by his sufferings and Sacrifice, has made to Almighty God for the Sins and Transgressions of Mankind: Justice being thus satisfied, Mercy takes Place and displays itself. Praised therefore be Almighty God for his wonderful Goodness to Mankind in providing a Saviour to redeem us, to deliver us from the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins.

Thus we see that Divine Revelation, and no other Religion in the World, can give us Security for the Pardon and Forgiveness of Sins, and consequently for Salvation and Happiness hereafter: Thy Sins are forgiven thee,

thee, is Life and Happiness itself. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* If the Deists would seriously consider that all Mankind are Sinners, in a State of Disobedience against God, they would evidently perceive the Insufficiency of natural Religion, and the Necessity of Divine Revelation for the Happiness of Men; the Interposition of some divine Person to put Mankind into a State of Salvation. Without Divine Revelation there is no Safety, no Security, no Pardon, no Forgiveness, and consequently no Happiness hereafter.

The Reason perhaps why the Deists do not entertain a favourable Opinion of Divine Revelation is, because they do not consider that they are born in a Christian Country; where they have the Advantage of the Christian Religion before them, the Benefit of the glorious Light of the Gospel of Christ, a very great Advantage in the Case; and that from this sacred Treasure they extract the best Part of their religious Knowledge, and then complement their Reason with it, as if their own Reason produced it. By this Means, through the Pride of their natural Reason, they think that they have no Need of Divine Revelation, but that their own Reason is sufficient for all the Purposes of Duty and Obedience, of Life and Happiness; upon which Account they
forget

forget themselves, and the corrupt and sinful Condition they are in.

It may not be improper here to observe; that the Satisfaction, which the Justice of God required for the Breach of his divine Laws, was not a vindictive and revengeful but a judicial Satisfaction; such a Satisfaction as ought to be made to the Justice of God, as the Governor of the World for the Violation of his Laws, a suitable Punishment for the Commission of Offences; for Wickedness and Vice, in the Nature and Reason of Things, ought not to go unpunished. Justice is not only concerned to reward Virtue, but to punish Vice; this is what Justice, for the Sake of good Government, requires. This is the Method, by which all temporal Legislators keep up their Authority in the World: There is no other Way to secure the Honour of the Legislator, and to induce Men to observe the Laws, but by executing proper Punishment upon Offenders; for otherwise the Laws would be to no Purpose, and the Authority of Princes would be made the Sport and Contempt of every audacious and insulting Transgressor. It is likewise not agreeable to the divine Wisdom of Almighty God to suffer his Laws, by which he designs to govern Mankind, to be despised and trampled upon with Impunity by every bold and daring Offender.

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It is therefore just and reasonable, that Satisfaction should be made to Almighty God for the Breach of his divine Laws; and this the Son of God, upon the Account of Man's Salvation, has fully done by his perfect Obedience, Sufferings and Death, for the Sins of Mankind: Who thereby has reconciled God to Men, procured their Pardon, and put them into a State of Salvation, into a Capacity of being happy hereafter. The Design of this most valuable Satisfaction, given by the Son of God, is not only to secure the Honour of the divine Laws, and God's eternal Justice and Purity; but to shew God's great Aversion to Sin, his most severe Resentment against it, and to deter Men from the Commission of Sin. If Almighty God had forgiven Mankind their Sins without any Satisfaction, this would have been a Means to have facilitated the Commission of Sin, and to have made Men unconcerned about the Transgression of the divine Laws; which gentle Proceeding would have impeached the divine Justice: And if Almighty God had punished the Sinner with the greatest Severity, as he justly might have done, this rigorous Proceeding would have left no Room to celebrate his Mercy. But by the divine Wisdom of God there is such an excellent Mixture of Justice and Goodness, of Equity and Compassion in the Method of our Redemption; that God's Honour is preserved,

Mens

Mens Sins are pardoned and forgiven, and they are put into a State of Salvation ; which wise Contrivance has reconciled the Justice and Goodness of God.

If God's Goodness inclines him to Mercy, to spare Mankind involved in Sin and Disobedience ; yet his Justice requires him to be true to his own Honour and Dignity, to assert the Equity and Reasonableness of his own Laws, and to punish Transgressors ; for otherwise he would deprive himself of the Government of the World, and leave daring Sinners to transgress without Control. We therefore see the most wonderful and wise Contrivance of Almighty God in the Salvation of Mankind, by the Death and Sufferings and perfect Obedience of his own Son for the Sins of the World: God's Justice is thereby fully satisfied, and his Goodness thereby most gloriously displays itself ; God's Honour by this Means is entirely secured, and Man's Salvation thereby is fully accomplished. We may therefore again truly say to ourselves in the Language of Divine Revelation ; *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out !* Rom. xi. 33.

2dly, Divine Aid and Assistance to enable Men to perform their Duty, in this frail and sinful State, are absolutely necessary to Salvation, but what natural Religion can have
nothing

nothing to do with, they being far out of its Reach.

In this frail and sinful State, where there are so many Evils and Temptations to encounter with, so many Dangers and Hazards in running the spiritual Race; the inordinate Inclinations of Nature, the Pleasures of Sense, the Business of the World, the pernicious Devices of our spiritual Enemies, and the little Strength we have through the Corruption of human Nature to support and defend ourselves: The Consideration of these many and great Evils shew the absolute Necessity of divine Aid and Assistance to enable Men to perform their Duty, to conduct them safe to Happiness and Salvation.

But how can natural Religion supply us with supernatural Grace and Assistance? Or how can sinful Man, in a State of Disobedience and Rebellion against his Maker, obnoxious to the Displeasure of God, in his own Person make Application for these divine Favours? Upon what Foundation can natural Religion proceed? If God is not reconciled to Men, and their Sins pardoned and forgiven, there can be no Ground to expect divine Grace and Assistance, nor any Favours from Heaven. That this is the Case, that Almighty God is reconciled to Man, and upon Repentance pardons and forgives him, can no Ways be discovered by natural Reason, nor can ever be known and found out

out by it. Without Reconciliation, Mankind in a State of Sin and Disobedience may more reasonably expect the divine Anger, than the divine Aid and Assistance of Almighty God; and therefore from mere natural Religion there can be no Hope of supernatural Supplies for the Weakness and Frailty of human Beings. Divine Aid, under natural Religion, might be long sought for, but sought in vain: No Favours would be granted from Heaven, till Satisfaction was made to the Justice of God for the Breach of his divine Laws. That Satisfaction is made to the Justice of God, we are fully acquainted by Divine Revelation. That informs us, in Consideration of the Worthiness and Merits of a Saviour, that whatsoever is necessary to carry us to Salvation and Happiness will be granted to us; *Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you through the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; according as his divine Power hath given unto us all Things that pertain unto Life and Godliness, through the Knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Virtue, 2 Pet. i. 2, 3.* There is therefore no other Religion in the World that can give us Information of this most important Affair, and Assurance of divine Aid and Assistance, but only divine Revelation: There is therefore no other Religion in the World, that can direct us in the right Way and enable us to obtain eternal Happiness and Salvation, but only revealed Religion.

Religion. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.*

3dly, The Resurrection of the Body; that both Soul and Body, the complete Man, may be made completely happy in another World, is absolutely necessary to Salvation; but is what natural Religion can have nothing to do with, nor can ever make any Discovery of; it being far out of its Reach.

As Man consists of Soul and Body, so his complete Happiness consists in a strict Union of Soul and Body together. The Separation of Soul and Body is a State of Death, and consequently cannot be a State of complete Happiness to Man. When therefore the Soul is separated from the Body by its Death or Dissolution, the Man cannot be said in a proper Sense to live and be happy, because the complete Man does not live and is happy. A State of Death is a State of Punishment, for the Sin and Disobedience of Mankind: *In the Day that Thou eatest thereof, Thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17. the Wages of Sin is Death, Rom. vi. 23.* And therefore, as long as the Body is in a State of Death, Man is in a State of some Punishment, and consequently not in a complete happy State; and therefore till the Soul and Body be again reunited, which is the proper and natural State of Man's Life, Man cannot be said to live fully, and to enjoy complete Happiness. The Re-

surrection of the Body therefore is absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Man; and no one, that seriously considers the original State of Mankind, can think that Man's Happiness is complete, till the Body is raised up and reunited to the Soul. The Resurrection of the Body is a Doctrine which natural Religion can make no Discovery of, nor can any Ways concern itself about; there are no natural Arguments, nor any natural Proofs for the Resurrection of the Dead, because Nature has no Power to raise the Dead; and therefore natural Religion can make no Discovery of that, which is out of its Power to concern itself with. According to natural Reason and common Experience the dead Body must remain where it lies; because there is no natural Power, Strength, Ingenuity, Skill, nor Ability to raise it up: All the Powers of Nature joined together cannot raise a dead Body. Nothing can be sufficient to this great Purpose, to this vast Undertaking, but the mighty Power of Almighty God. The Doctrine therefore of the Resurrection of the Dead does no Ways belong to natural Religion, but wholly depends upon the divine Will and Pleasure of Almighty God, which Divine Revelation only can discover and make known to us, which alone can acquaint us with the Mind and Will of God. Divine Revelation acquaints us with the Certainty of the Resurrection of the Dead,

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of the Resurrection of the Body or of the Flesh out of the Grave; — *All that are in the Graves shall bear his Voice, and shall come forth: they that have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation:* John v. 28, 29. This Passage assures all Men, both Good and Bad, of the Resurrection of the Dead, but the Just only will have the Benefit of it. We are as certain that we shall rise from the Dead, as that we shall die; *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,* 1 Cor. xv. 22. Nay, Christ Jesus rose again from the Dead in our Nature, 1 Cor. xv. 20. in human Nature, and was seen to carry it toward Heaven; *Acts* i. 9, 10. and there it was seen placed at the right Hand of God, *Acts* vii. 56. this is an absolute Proof and Demonstration of the Exaltation of human Nature into Heaven. Perhaps some, notwithstanding what our blessed Saviour has done upon our Account, may think it *a Thing incredible* for God to raise the Dead, to raise our dead Bodies out of the Grave, as St Paul intimates concerning some in his Time, *Acts* xxvi. 8. but if we seriously consider that Almighty God, who is infinite in Power, who made and upholds the World, who *giveth to all Life, Breath, and all Things,* *Acts* xvii. 25. declares that the Dead shall be raised up; it is a Thing no Ways incredible at all. We have no Reason to make any Scruples or Doubts about

the Resurrection; how a dead Body, long dead, reduced to Dust and Ashes, and to Appearance in a lost and perishing State, which may have undergone several Changes and Alterations, can be raised up to Life again. If Almighty God says, declares and promises, that the Dead shall be raised up, that Assurance is upon all Accounts sufficient for us, and we need not concern ourselves; and say, *How are the Dead raised up? And with what Body do they come?* 1 Cor. xv. 35. How can they live again, who are deceased? And what Kind of Bodies shall they have, whose Bodies have been long dead, and rotten in the Grave? If indeed human Power alone was concerned to raise the Dead, it would be a Thing incredible to believe the Resurrection; but when Almighty Power is engaged in this great Affair, it is a Thing no Ways incredible at all; but must in Reason gain Credit and Belief with Mankind. That divine Power, that made us out of the Dust of the Ground, can as easily raise us out of the Grave, out of the Dust, as at first It made us and gave us a Being; and therefore we have all the Reason in the World to believe the Resurrection of the Dead, or a State of Happiness both for Soul and Body in another World. The Thoughts of being for ever confined to the Grave, to a State of Rotteness and Corruption, are terribly shocking; what the Mind of Man, in regard to
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its Creation, is greatly averſe to, and cannot by any Means bear with and endure. The Mind is of too noble and refined a Nature to be eaſy with an eternal Diſſolution of the Body, with an eternal Separation from it: And therefore religious and good People make it their Buſineſs to ſerve God faithfully in this Life, in Expectation of a bleſſed Reſurrection to another and eternal Life. They hope, and wiſh, and earneſtly deſire, as they have the greateſt Reaſon to do, that there will be an immortal State hereafter; in which Soul and Body ſhall be reunited, and partake of everlaſting Happineſs. The ſacred Authority of Divine Revelation gives us the utmoſt Affurance imaginable of theſe moſt important Affairs, and leaves no Room to Doubt. Theſe are ſuch great Advantages in Favour of the Divine Revelation of the Goſpel, as no other Religion in the World can ſhew the like, nor any Thing that can come up to them: The Excellency of this Religion exceeds all others, and this is the only Religion Mankind can ſafely rely upon for Salvation and Happineſs.

We have now heard what natural Religion can do in the great Affair of Salvation, and the Excellency of Divine Revelation above it, even in thoſe Points which it can make Diſcovery of. We have likewiſe obſerved what natural Religion cannot do, and the great Neceſſity of the Divine Revelation

of the Gospel to discover to us those most important Points which greatly concern the Salvation and Happiness of Mankind. The Consequence of which is, that the Gospel of Christ Jesus is the only true Way to Salvation; and that no other Religion in the World can procure the Favour of God and an happy State hereafter, but the Christian Dispensation. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* Perhaps some may think it strange that no Man could be saved by natural Religion, which is the Result, as some affirm, of right Reasoning, and grounded upon the clear Principles of natural Light. Whatever great Things may be said in Favour of natural Reason, yet it must be confessed that it is in a sinful and corrupted State; and in a State of Sin and Corruption it will puzzle the best natural Reason in the World to find out a Method to procure the Favour and Love of God for Mankind, a fit and proper Sacrifice to appease an offended Deity, to reconcile him to Sinners, to satisfy his Justice for the frequent Transgressions of his Laws. The great Mistake of those, who favour natural Religion in Prejudice to Divine Revelation, seems to me to lie in this Point; that they do not seriously and rightly consider that Mankind are in a State of Sin: In such a State, by their own Fault, as they cannot perform

perform perfect Obedience to the Laws of Nature, which only can entitle them to Happiness and Comfort. They do not consider that they are in such a State as requires Reconciliation, and a proper Person to make it; without which Considerations no Man can be saved. Under a State of Disobedience; of Sin and Guilt, which is the common and sad Condition of all Mankind; *for all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*, Rom. iii. 23. Means must be sought out to appease God's Anger, to reconcile him to Men for their many and great Transgressions, or else no Salvation and Happiness are to be had. A Saviour must be applied to by the sinful Race of Mankind. If Man indeed had never sinned, never offended Almighty God, never transgressed his divine Laws; but had always preserved the original Perfection in which he was made; then there would have been no Occasion for a Saviour; because Sin having not made any Separation between God and Man, there would of Course be a mutual Love of God and Man for each other; Man would then have been such a Creature as would have been pleasing to God. But as Men are in a State of Sin, it is impossible to be saved without a Saviour; because as Sin has made a Separation between God and Man, so there must be some divine Person to make Reconciliation between them; not only to satisfy Almighty God for the

Breach of his Laws, to vindicate his divine Honour in the World, to keep up his Authority and Government over Men ; but also to be the happy Means of procuring Mercy and Compassion from Almighty God, his Pardon and Forgiveness, his Love and Favour for Mankind ; *for he is of too pure a Nature to behold Iniquity and Pollution*, Psal. cxlv. 17. Habak. i. 13. Without a Saviour, God's Justice in a State of Sin and Disobedience must exert itself, and take Vengeance upon Sinners ; because Men through their own Fault depraved their Nature, and thereby became obnoxious to the Wrath of God : But with a Saviour, upon religious Behaviour, God is entirely reconciled to Mankind. But that God is reconciled to the World by the Death and Sacrifice of his own Son, by a Saviour, is a Point which natural Religion could never discover, nor form any Notion about it ; and therefore mere natural Religion, a Religion without a Saviour, could never save any Man. *Neither is there Salvation in any other ; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* Whatever Favour and Mercy Almighty God has been graciously pleased to shew to Mankind since the Fall of Man, whatever Compassion to those that have truly repented of their Sins, and whatever Kindness to virtuous and good Men, are all owing to the Worthiness and Merits of a Saviour ;

our ; though not known in all Ages to Mankind. Upon the Account of natural Religion, and in its Favour, Application has been made to the ancient Heathen Philosophers, who closely applied themselves to the Study of Nature, and had as great a Share of natural Reason, as any since their Time can justly pretend to : But if we take Pains to read their Lives, and take Notice of the Observations made upon them ; we shall find that they were greatly mistaken in their Principles, and no less debauched in their Practice, guilty of many Errors. This is the Account which the Scripture gives of the ancient Heathen ; who debased the divine Nature of God, dishonoured his infinite Perfections, and were unthankful for his divine Favours : — *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools : And changed the Glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things :* Rom. i. 21, 22, 23. Though the ancient Heathen, by the bare Light of Nature and natural Reason, could not discover those great Points which are necessary to Salvation ; yet they had Assistance enough by bare natural Reason to have entertained better Notions of the immensely great and glorious God, and
his

his spiritual Nature; than to have represented him by the base images of the meanest of Creatures. Almighty God is so infinitely great and glorious, that the highest of created Beings cannot sufficiently set forth and represent his surpassing Glory, much less can vile Images of the meanest Creatures do it : The most excellent Creature cannot give or exhibit to us any just Notions of the immense Perfections of Almighty God. For thus debasing the divine Nature of the Deity, for worshipping and serving the Creature more than the Creator, and for their Ingratitude to Heaven for the many Favours conferred upon them, Almighty God gave up the ancient Heathen to vile Affections, to their own vicious and corrupted Nature, and left them in their own Hands ; which just Judgment produced most dreadful Effects, of which *St Paul* gives us an Account in the First Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*.

It must be acknowledged that natural Religion has some Truth in it, but it must likewise be acknowledged that it is mixed with great Uncertainty ; and that it has not sufficient Knowledge, Power, and Authority to carry Men, without the Assistance of Divine Revelation, to a State of eternal Salvation and Happiness hereafter. This Affair of procuring eternal Salvation is the great Design of revealed Religion, which shews the superior Excellence of Divine Revelation ;
and

and how it enlarges Religion above all that natural Reason could ever possibly do in the World. I come now,

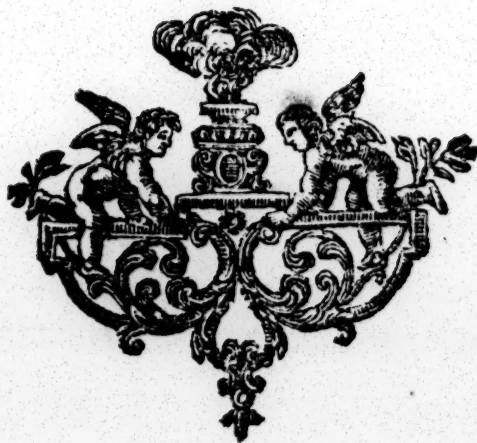
Fourthly and lastly; To make some Reflections, and so conclude.

As Divine Revelation, especially that of the Gospel, directs us in the right Way to obtain eternal Salvation and Happiness; so we should make it our Business to be acquainted with this divine Religion. This will not only be the best Way to give us the truest Notions of God and Religion, but will powerfully stir us up to the Practice of our Duty. *For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart: Heb. iv. 12. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth: John iv. 24.* The true Reason why natural Religion is by some People so much extolled, and Divine Revelation has not that due Respect paid to it which it justly deserves, is because the Sacred Writings, which contain the great and sublime Points of Divine Revelation, are not duly consulted, religiously regarded, and carefully meditated upon. If the Sacred Writings had that religious Regard paid to them, which their surpassing Merit justly deserve, natural Religion would make but a mean

mean Appearance in the World, in respect of Divine Revelation, and to what it is now unjustly extolled for by some People, who think it sufficient for all the Purposes of Duty and Happiness. The true Reason why there is so much Carelessness and Neglect of religious Duties, and so much Vice and Looseness in the World, is because People will not be at the Pains to read the Sacred Oracles of God, and be directed by their divine Authority. The Bible, the best Book in the World, the Book by which we shall be *judged hereafter*, John xii. 48. and which contains *the Words of eternal Life*, John vi. 68. is strangely neglected by the Generality of People: And what is as strange, Books, which tend to little or no good Purpose, but rather minister to useless and idle Speculations, are much consulted and read with Pleasure; which is the Reason that there are so many Errors and Mistakes in Life, and such Coolness and Indifference in the great Affairs of God and Religion. To prevent therefore all Manner of Mistakes both in Principles and Practice; let us frequently consult the good Word of God, devoutly read it, and religiously meditate on it; let us make it the Rule of our Faith, and the Law of our Life and Conversation; and then by the Grace of God we shall be free from every evil Thing that may endanger our Salvation, and be safely conducted in
 God's

God's good Time to a State of eternal Life
and Happiness hereafter.

Now to God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Holy Ghost, three Per-
sons but one God; unto the King eter-
nal, immortal, invisable, to the only
wise God, be Honour and Glory, for
ever and ever. *Amen.*



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*The secret Things belong unto the LORD our GOD,
but Things revealed belong to Men:*

O R,

A DISCOURSE concerning the Myſterious
Doctrin of the ever Bleſſed and Glorious
TRINITY.

DEUT. XXIX. 29.

*The ſecret Things belong unto the Lord our God;
but thoſe Things, which are revealed, belong
unto us, and to our Children for ever:—.*

THESE Words are interpreted two
Ways:

I. The Jews generally underſtand by them
the Punishment of thoſe ſecret Sins, which
belong to God more immediately to puniſh
them himſelf; ſuch as perverſe Diſobedience
to his Laws, and a Contempt of his divine
Authority, going on in a continued Courſe
of Sin and Wickedneſs.

II. Theſe

II. These Words may be understood to contain a Dehortation or Dissuasive from enquiring into the hidden Dispensations of divine Providence, into the secret Ways and Judgments of God ; which are not revealed, which we cannot give any Account of, nor are searchable by our narrow Capacities; and which are Matter for our Admiration, not for our Study and Enquiry. And by Parity of religious Reason, the Words of the Text are a Dissuasive from enquiring into those secret and hidden Mysteries, which belong to God himself ; such as it is not possible for human Capacity to comprehend or understand, and which are not revealed in the Sacred Writings. *But those Things, which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our Children for ever :* Whatsoever Almighty God hath been graciously pleased to reveal to us, is the Object of our Study and Enquiry, and it is our Duty to be acquainted with it. The revealed Will of God is not only designed for the Conduct of our Life and Conversation, but also to direct our Faith. The Sacred Writings are the only infallible Guides to lead us into all Truth.

In discoursing upon these Words, I shall apply them to the great Mystery of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, which we this Day commemorate; and is a Doctrine which concerns our Salvation, as well as others of the Christian Religion.

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I do not suppose that any here present deny the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, no more than they deny any other Doctrines of the Christian Religion; but there are some among Christian People, who deny or disbelieve this great Point of Christian Faith; this great Mystery, into which they were baptized. As this is the Day that we celebrate the Festival of the Mystery of the ever blessed Trinity, and as we are exhorted to *be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh us a Reason of the Hope that is in us*; — 1 Pet. iii. 15. to be always prepared to make a Reply to any Questions, which shall be asked us concerning the Grounds of the Christian Faith, especially of this great and fundamental Doctrine, by those who seriously, and with Modesty, desire to be instructed and satisfied about this most important Point: And as we should always be fortified with proper Arguments to defend our Faith against all Objectors, against those that do not mean well, who lie in wait to deceive, and make rude Attacks upon our common Faith, that Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, *Jude 4.* As these Things are thus, so it is very proper at this or any other Time to discourse of this great and Mystrious Doctrine; especially as Faith is necessary to Salvation, as well as good Works.

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I must acknowledge that this is a difficult Subject to discourse upon in relation to some People, who will not believe any Doctrine but what they can understand and comprehend; but I believe that what will be said in this Discourse will give reasonable Satisfaction to all well-meaning and reasonable People. I must likewise observe, that we must not by any Means attempt to explain this Mysterious Doctrine; because the further we go beyond what Almighty God hath thought fit to reveal to us in Scripture concerning the Trinity, the more we shall be entangled, perplexed, and confounded; and therefore I shall shew what is revealed in the Sacred Writings concerning the Mystery of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, what is the Mystery or Secret contained in it, and shall return proper Answers to several Objections made against this Doctrine: These Points I believe will be sufficient to satisfy every reasonable and unprejudiced Person concerning this most important Doctrine of the Trinity.

We have already observed and commemorated, according to the religious Practice of the Church of *England*, our blessed Saviour's Birth, his Sufferings and Death, his Resurrection from the Dead, his Ascension into Heaven, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles on *Whitsunday*, on *Sunday* last: We come now upon this Day to commemorate the Festival of the ever blessed and glorious

glorious Trinity. This Day was anciently looked upon only as an Octave of the Feast of *Pentecost* or *Whitsunday*; an Octave, in Divinity, signifies the eighth Day after some particular Festivals of the Year; the Observation of this Day as the Feast of the Trinity being of a later Date. As the Praises of the Trinity were every Day celebrated in the Doxology, Hymns, and Creeds, as certain Writers have observed; so the Church thought that there was no Occasion to celebrate one particular Day to praise the Trinity, which was done every Day in her Divine Service. But when the Arians and other Heretics appeared in the World, and had spread their Errors among Christian People; the Church thought it proper, that one particular Day should be appointed on Purpose for a more solemn Commemoration of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, and to make it the Subject of their religious Meditation. For which Purpose the Church chose this Day as the most proper Time to celebrate this great Festival; for when our blessed Saviour had ascended into Heaven, after he had conversed with Men upon Earth, and the Holy Ghost had descended upon the Apostles, there then ensued the full Knowledge of the glorious Trinity, or the Manifestation of the Three divine Persons, which before that Time was not so clearly and completely made known to Mankind; not in the Manner in which it was then ex-

hibited and set forth to them. I wish that those, who differ from us, would take Notice of the Wisdom and Excellency of the Church of *England* in our Divine Service.

In discoursing upon the Words of the Text,

First, I shall shew what is revealed concerning the Mystery or Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity; *which belongs unto us, and to our Children for ever.*

Secondly, I shall shew what is the Mystery or Secret contained in this Doctrine; *which no Ways belongs to us, but only to the Lord our God*; and that our Incapacity to understand it, is no sufficient Reason to induce us to disbelieve it.

Thirdly, I shall answer several Objections. *Fourthly and lastly*; I shall make some Reflections, and so conclude.

First, I shall shew what is revealed concerning the Mystery or Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity; *which belongs unto us, and to our Children for ever.*

We are informed out of the Sacred Scriptures, which are the only Writings we can have Recourse to for this Doctrine, that there are Three Persons in the Deity or God-head, different or distinct from each other:
Three,

Three, who are stiled God ; of equal Power, Authority, and Duration ; who are the Objects of religious Worship : Three, who are joined together in the most solemn Parts of Religion. In the solemn Form of Baptism, or initiating of Men into the Christian Religion ; the Disciples were expressly commanded by our blessed Saviour, to *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* * : Matt. xxviii. 19. In the Apostolical

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* I desire that Notice may be taken of the Authority of the Three divine Persons, there is no Difference or Distinction made upon this Account between them. Is it necessary that we should be baptized in the Name of the Father? It is equally necessary that we should be baptized in the Name of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Necessity by this Passage of Scripture is equally alike ; and therefore when our blessed Saviour commanded his Disciples to *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* ; He commanded them not only to name the Names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost upon those whom they baptized ; but to signify to them the Authority of these Three divine Persons, and the Profession of the Trinity of the Persons in the Deity or Godhead ; to dedicate the Persons baptized to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and thereby to oblige them to worship and serve the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost equally alike, performing equal Obedience and Submission to them all. This is such a Text of Scripture as will puzzle all the Arians and Socinians in the World, and to which they can give no reasonable nor consistent Reply. I have scarce ever seen this Passage of Scripture taken Notice of by the Arians and Socinians ; they seem industriously to avoid it, for fear of being obliged to acknowledge the Truth.

Benediction; the Apostle wishes to the *Corinthians* that *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost would be with them all*: 2 Cor. xiii. 14. In the inauguration of Christ, in the Consecration or setting him apart for his Mediatorial Office, in the Third Chapter of *St Matthew*; which is appointed by the Church for the Second Lesson for this Morning-Service: Mention is made of the Baptizing of Jesus or of the Son, the Descent of the Spirit of God or of the Holy Ghost *like a Dove upon him*, and the Voice of the Father declaring Jesus to be *his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased*: Matt. iii. 16, 17. Here the Father speaks from Heaven, the Son comes out of the Water, and the Holy Ghost descends upon him. *But the Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, He shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things*
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Truth, which they have so much opposed and contradicted. The Arians and Socinians, the Opposers of our blessed Saviour's Divinity, most grossly pervert the sacred Scriptures, and make use of artful Arguments to evade the Truth, in order to support their erroneous Tenets and false Opinions; and seem to me to be afraid to take Notice of those Passages of Scripture, which carry full Proof of the sublime Doctrine of the Trinity; as the Form of Baptism and the Apostolical Benediction. These Passages bear too hard upon them for Prevarication, for Insincerity and foul Dealing; and therefore they lay Stress upon such Portions of Scripture as they think are more easily capable of a two-fold Interpretation, or may be distorted or wrested to a double Meaning.

to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you : John xiv. 26. — Grace be unto you, and Peace, from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come ; and from the seven Spirits who are before his Throne ; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the First-begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, Rev. i. 4, 5. From which Passages of Scripture it is very evident ; that there are Three Persons, of very high Character and Regard ; who have equal Power and Authority, and to whom an equal Share of Honour and Reverence ought to be paid. They are stiled, in several Places of Scripture, *God*, as I have already observed to you ; and have there this most adorable Name given to them : So that they all are entitled to the highest Acts of religious Worship.

And though these Three Persons are different or distinct from each other ; (for the Scripture speaks of them as we do ; when we would signify Persons, Subsistences, or Beings that are distinct) yet they are but One in Nature or Essence ; Three in Relations, yet but One in Substance : That is, these three Persons are but one God ; they constitute or make the Deity ; so that they all are entitled to the same Acts of religious Worship, and ought to have the same Honour and Glory paid to them. This the Scripture likewise informs us of ; *There are three that bear Record in Heaven ; the Father, the*
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Word,

Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One: 1 John v. 7. That is, these three different Persons make but one Deity or Godhead, or are but one God; so that the Nature of the Father, of the Son or Word, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Besides, if we had not this Passage of St John, which some dispute the Authority of to prove the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity or one only God in three Persons in the Deity; yet this Doctrine may be justly and truly deduced from the Holy Scriptures. The Sacred Writings acquaint us, that there is but one God: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: Mark xii. 29. Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no God, I know not any: Isai xlv. 8. St Paul tells the Corinthians, that though there be that are called Gods, whether in Heaven, or in Earth, (as there be Gods many, and Lords many) But to us, who are Christians, there*

* Our Church therefore justly retains the true ancient *Gloria Patri*, which was in Use before the Time of *Arius*: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be; World without End: Amen." As Glory was due to these divine Persons in the Beginning and from Eternity, so Glory is now due to them, and will be due for ever and to Eternity. The Arians afterwards, to serve their impious Turn, to promote a bad Cause, altered it to Glory be to the Father, by or through the Son, and in the Holy Ghost. Which *Gloria Patri* is not received by any Christian Church, or Body of Christian People that I ever heard of.

there is but one God: — 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. And in his Epistle to *Timothy* he asserts, *there is one God*: — 1 Tim. ii. 5. From hence I conclude, that if the sacred Writers, who were divinely inspired, who therefore delivered nothing but what they were commissioned by the immediate Direction of God to deliver: If these, I say, join the Son and Holy Ghost as distinct Persons in the Deity or Godhead with the Father; as they have done in the solemn Form of Baptism, in the Apostolical Benediction, in those Passages of St *John* in his Gospel and in the *Revelations*, and in the Inauguration of Christ, without any Mark of Difference but that of Personal Relation. And if the sacred Writers do not only acknowledge, but also profess and teach others this great Doctrine, as an Article or Point of Faith to be believed, that there is but one God; as it is very plain and evident that they do in several Places of Scripture: From hence, I say, I conclude that it evidently follows, and is beyond all Dispute, never to be refuted; that these three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all equally God alike, and but one God; they make but one Deity or Godhead: They are that one God, which the Scriptures assert and affirm to us. This Doctrine is called the Trinity in Unity; which Words, though they are not found in Scripture explicitly and directly, or are there in express Terms so named, yet are implicitly; that is, as to the Sense and
Meaning

Meaning of them. *For there are Three that bear Record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; there is the Trinity: and these Three are One; there is the Unity. Nothing more plain, nothing more evident. The Word Person, applied to God, is contained in Scripture; the Son of God, our blessed Saviour, is said to be the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person: Heb. i. 3.*

From what hath been said, we plainly perceive, that the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity is evidently revealed in Scripture; that there are Three distinct Persons in the Deity, Three who make but one Godhead, or are only one God, being only One in Nature and Essence. This Doctrine is so plainly to be perceived, *that*, as the Scripture expresses it, *he may run that readeth it*; Habak. ii. 2. the meanest Capacity that means well may find it contained in the Sacred Writings. Nothing so mysterious can be expressed in more clear, more significant Terms; and is revealed in as plain a Manner as the Nature of this most sublime Doctrine will admit of. Every Man, who believes the Authority of the Sacred Scriptures, who looks upon them as the Word of God, has abundant Evidence to believe this Doctrine; all the Reason he can possibly desire; because God, who revealed it, cannot be deceived, nor will he ever deceive any Man. There is indeed some Mystery or Secret

cret contained in this Doctrine, which the shallow Understanding of Man cannot comprehend, *which belongs only to the Lord our God*; so that the Scripture could not adapt itself to the narrow Capacity of human Beings; but this is no Reason to disbelieve it, as I shall shew in this Discourse.

I come now to shew,

Secondly, What is the Mystery or Secret contained in the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity; *which no Ways belongs to us, but only to the Lord our God*; and that our Incapacity to understand it, is no sufficient Reason to induce us to disbelieve it.

The Mystery or Secret contained in the Doctrine of the Trinity, is how Three are One; in what Manner three distinct Persons, who are separately stiled *God* in Scripture, who all are Immense and Incomprehensible, Eternal and Almighty, constitute or make one Deity or Godhead; or are only one God. The Father God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. And how we are to conceive the eternal Generation of the Son from the Father, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son.

These Things we cannot possibly conceive nor understand; we cannot form any adequate or just Notions of them; our Reason
cannot

cannot explain to us, how these Things can be. We, who are finite, cannot possibly find out the Ways of Him that is infinite; we cannot search into the Nature of the Almighty, nor comprehend the Essence of the divine Being: The boundless Perfections of God cannot be dived into by the shallow Understanding of Man. We cannot conceive how a Being can be of itself from Eternity, without any Cause of its Existence: Or how a Being can be eternal, without Beginning and without End. We cannot understand, how a Trinity of Persons can be consistent with the Unity of the Godhead. We cannot comprehend, how God's Knowledge can certainly foresee an Event, through contingent, through uncertain Causes; and yet not destroy Free-will, nor affect the Liberty of human Actions. We cannot form any adequate Conceptions concerning the Immensity of God; how he can be present in every Place, and yet not circumscribed nor confined to any Place: How that without any Parts, he doth co-exist to all possible Extension of Matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immensely every where. We cannot understand, how God should make the World out of nothing; bring it into Being by a divine Fiat, by the speaking of a Word; or rather by willing it to be. These Things we cannot comprehend, we cannot understand, though they are certainly true: Therefore

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we must not pretend to search into these Secrets, they entirely belonging *unto the Lord our God*, but submit our Judgment to the religious Belief of them. It is sufficient for us, who are of a narrow Capacity; that this Doctrine of the Trinity, which I am now discoursing upon, is revealed in Scripture, is really true; though we cannot conceive it, nor explain in what Manner, or how it can be: We, whose Understanding is limited, must never pretend to have a full, a comprehensive Knowledge of this Mysterious Doctrine. It is directly contrary to Reason; that a Being, who is finite, should comprehend a Being who is infinite. We may indeed form to ourselves some faint Ideas of the divine Excellencies, as far as Almighty God has revealed them unto us; that he is an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, all-wise, all-just, and all-good Being: But how or in what Manner he is so, we cannot comprehend nor explain. If we therefore undertake to frame adequate Notions of boundless Perfections, of infinite Goodness, Power, Wisdom, and Contrivance, from some weak Resemblances of them in created Beings; and to judge of the great God by the Actings or Movings of our Minds in this imperfect State; we shall come vastly short of any just Ideas of his divine Being, and commit fatal Mistakes about his immense, his supreme Majesty. God has for ever residing in him all
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the Perfections, all the Excellencies we can possibly conceive, we can possibly think of in our Minds ; and infinitely more. *St Paul* asserts, *that we know but in Part* ; and that what we do know is *through a Glass darkly*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. We have only some obscure, some imperfect Notions of the divine Nature : And indeed this is the farthest that human Understanding can go in this Life. How vain, how impious is it therefore to pretend to search into those Secrets, *which belong unto the Lord our God* ; and which it is impossible for Men to know, to comprehend ! These Mysteries can be solved only by that divine Being, who his infinite in Wisdom, Knowledge, and Power. *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out !* Rom. xi. 33. *Canst thou,* says *Zophar* unto *Job*, *by searching find out God ? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection ? It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do ? Deeper than Hell, what canst thou know ?* Job xi. 7, 8. When *Moses* enquired of God what he should say unto the Children of *Israel*, if they should ask him ; what is the Name of that Being, who had sent him unto them ? That he should say, *I am that I am* ; Exod. iii. 13, 14. that is ; I am he who necessarily exists, who always was, and ever will be. This was the Answer which God returned him, what his finite Understanding could possibly comprehend.

prehend. God did not acquaint him how or in what Manner he necessarily existed ; such Knowledge would have been too wonderful for *Moses*, or any other Man ; he could not have attained unto this Myſtery. God acquainted him that he necessarily exists, that he is eternal and unchangeable in his Nature, conſtant and certain in his Word and Will : This Information was ſufficient for *Moses*, or any other Man ; being the Declaration of God himſelf, whoſe Nature is incomprehenſible, and whoſe Word is as infallible as a Demonſtration. But ſuch an Answer as this will not ſerve ſome of the inquiſitive Geniuſes of this Age ; who, like former Ages, are deſirous to know more than this ; though if they are never ſo curious, they will be extremely in the Dark concerning the Nature of the divine Being, of the immenſely great and glorious God. There are Myſteries in the Godhead, which human Reaſon cannot penetrate ; Heights, which Men cannot ſoar to ; and Depths, which they cannot fathom. Reaſon itſelf, if it be not intoxicated with Pride, with Madneſs, will not only acknowledge that it is thus, but will alſo conſent that it is fit it ſhould be ſo : For if Man could fully comprehend the Nature or Eſſence of Almighty God ; How great muſt we be ! How little He ! We more than Men ; He leſs than God. O vain Man, baniſh thy Pride, baniſh thy Arrogance ; and though
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professing thyself wise, yet confess that thou art ignorant in the Knowledge of divine Mysteries. Be humble, be modest; submit thy Judgment, captivate thy Reason to the Belief of unsearchable Truths. Can Man *measure*, as the Prophet *Isaiab* elegantly expresses this Passage by the Direction of the Almighty, *the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand? Or mete out Heaven with the Span, and comprehend the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weigh the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance?* Isai. xl. 12. If Man cannot perform these Miracles; he must never pretend by searching to find out the Nature of the great and mighty God, and to comprehend his divine Essence: This is a more difficult Task than the former; which is too difficult to be performed by any human Being.

And now, though we cannot understand the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, this Mystery; though it be infinitely out of our Power to comprehend it; yet this Incapacity is no sufficient Reason, nor any Reason at all, to induce us to disbelieve it. For if it was, we must daily give the Lie to our Senses; because there are several Things about us, Things that we daily converse with, the Nature of which we cannot comprehend or understand; and yet according to this Notion we must not believe them, notwithstanding we see them; and the Reason is, because we do not comprehend them;

them ; for the Argument proceeds for the Disbelief of the Doctrine of the Trinity, from our Incapacity to understand or comprehend it, not because we do not sensibly perceive the Trinity. There are several Things that we see ourselves, that we daily converse with ; the Nature of which we cannot comprehend, nor conceive in what Manner they are done, or how they subsist ; and yet this Difficulty is not looked upon by the greatest Masters of Reason to be any Argument to disbelieve them. Who can give an Account of the Union of the Soul and Body ? That a Body, which is composed of Matter, should be so closely joined to a Spirit, to an immaterial Substance ? What is the Chain, the invisible Tie that links or joins these two so closely together ; that they are not to be parted without great Violence offered to Nature ? What is it, that so fastly fixes the Soul to the Body, that it cannot get out of it when it would ? From whence proceeds the Liberty of our Will, that we can immediately act or not act at Pleasure ? That we can choose the one Object, and refuse the other, as we think fit ; without making any Consultation about the Difference of Things ? Who can give an Account of the Swiftneſs of our Thoughts ? Who can tell us how much the Mind of Man can understand, remember, and will ? Who can give us Information how or when the Soul comes into the Body ? How it goes

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out of it? Where it resides, during its Continuance in it? Who can inform us, *how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child?* as the wise Man expresses it: *Ecclesj. xi. 5.* How the Body is formed in the Womb, and fashioned into such an excellent Shape? How some Parts of it should be there hardened into Bones, and others kept soft for the Production of Flesh? What is the Substance or Essence of the least Plant, of the most minute Insect or Animal that lives? Who can understand and comprehend how the Seeds of Things contain the whole Form and Nature of Things from which they proceed, and into which by Degrees they increase and grow every Year? What is the Essence of Matter, stript of all Qualities and Accidents? What is the Continuity or Cohesion of Matter? What is it, which keeps some of the Parts of it so close together, that it is very difficult to part them; whilst others, with the greatest Ease, or without any Trouble, are separated one from another? Who can explain the Divisibility of Matter? Who can unfold the Mystery of the Wind? Who can tell us from whence it comes; how it is produced; what is the Cause of its blowing; how violently it will blow, and how long it will last; what is the Reason of its ceasing; and what becomes of it, after it ceaseth? As we have had it in the Gospel for the Day. Who is there of such an extensive Capacity;

Capacity ; as can comprehend, define, and explain the abstracted Nature of Number, Duration, and Space ; or can form any adequate Notions of such abstruse Points in Arithmetic and Philosophy ? Who can give an Account of the regular Flowing and Ebbing of the Sea, of the Motions of the Heavens and heavenly Bodies, and of the Loadstone's Inclination in this our Hemisphere to the Northern Pole ? And lastly ; Who can form any just Conception of Eternity, of that which never had a Beginning, nor will ever have an End ? This surprises, this confounds the Mind of Man.

Most of these Things, if not all of them, puzzle the most subtile, and perplex the most penetrating Philosophers ; they are such Difficulties, as cannot be solved by human Understanding. Every Man in these Cases must be forced to lay his Hand upon his Mouth, must be forced to be silent ; though he daily converses with these Things, though they are frequently before him. The greatest Naturalists must here quit their profound Wisdom, their admired Understanding, their great Skill, their extensive Knowledge ; they must sit down contented with their Ignorance. Reason, their Mistress, their Guide, which they so much boast of, has here left them to wander in the Dark ; she can go no further with them to give them Assistance. Great Complaints are made about Mysteries

in Religion, as great Difficulties, great Hardships; a great Yoke, a great Burden upon Men: But natural Mysteries sit easy upon their Minds; they do not seem so much prejudiced against them; they are ready enough to give Belief to them, though they cannot comprehend them: Which perverse Proceeding shews the great Partiality and unreasonable Prejudice of some conceited and weak People.

From what hath been said, we evidently perceive that it is not contrary to Reason to believe many Things, which we cannot comprehend nor explain. And if it is not repugnant to Reason to believe those Things, which we cannot comprehend; yet the Nature, the Essence, the Properties of which we have daily Opportunities to enquire into: I am certainly assured, that it is not repugnant to Reason to believe the Mystorious Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity; which is plainly revealed in Scripture, though the Manner how it is or can be, the particular Manner of the Existence of the Three Persons, we cannot comprehend or understand, nor explain with all our Reason. Nature itself exceeds our Comprehension; and therefore the divine Essence of Almighty God, who created Nature, must much more exceed it.

As therefore we must not give our Senses the Lie in the one Case, in disbelieving those Things

Things which we see but cannot comprehend; so we must not contradict our Reason in the other, in disbelieving this great Mystery of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, which is revealed in Scripture, the infallible Word of God; but which we cannot see at present, nor shall ever be able to comprehend. *Hardly do we guess aright, as the wise Man justly observes, at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are before us: Wisd. ix. 16.* Will we then be so vain, so impious, as to pretend to search into the hidden Secrets of the Almighty; into the unmeasurable Ways of Him that is infinite, which are past finding out by human Capacity. We must do in relation to this Mysteious Doctrine, as we are forced to do in several other Things, which we daily converse with: We must give up our Reason; that is, the Way or Manner of explaining this Doctrine, or how it can be; though at the same Time we have the greatest Reason, the greatest Arguments to induce us to believe it.

What a late learned Author has said in relation to an Atheist, who would not believe the Being of God, because he could not comprehend his Substance or Essence; I may very justly apply to all those, who do not believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, upon the Account of the Greatness of the Mystery, or because they cannot understand and com-

prehend it. The Words of this Author are these : “ Wherefore nothing can be more
 “ unreasonable and weak, than for an Atheist
 “ upon this Account to deny the Being of
 “ God, merely because his weak and finite
 “ Understanding cannot frame to itself any
 “ adequate Notion of the Substance or Ef-
 “ fence of that first and supreme Cause. So
 “ it is as unreasonable and weak for any
 “ Person not to believe or to deny the Doc-
 “ trine of the Trinity, because his weak and
 “ finite Understanding cannot comprehend
 “ this great Myſtery, or define in what Man-
 “ ner Three Persons who are ſtiled *God* in
 “ Scripture are one God, or how a Trinity
 “ of Persons in the Godhead are conſiſtent
 “ with the Unity of God. ” CLARK’S
Attributes, p. 39, 5th Edit. This was that
 Man that was a rigid Arian, and a zealous
 Contender for the Tenets of *Arius*; but if he
 had attended to the Force of his own Argu-
 ment, and would have been ſatiſfied in a ra-
 tional Way about the great Doctrines of the
 Trinity, he might have died truly Orthodox
 and a right Believer.

It may not be improper in this Place to
 give ſome Account of the Meaning of the
 Word REASON; becauſe I frequently make
 Uſe of it in this Diſcourſe, and becauſe ſome
 Men commit Miſtakes about it. It is a
 Word that has been much abuſed, and the
 Abufe of it has been prejudicial to Truth;
 and

and to the Interest of Religion. There is no Opinion so absurd and inconsistent, so contradictory to Truth and the Nature of Things, but it pretends to defend itself by Reason; nay, the different Way of different People's Thinking and Judging is stiled *Reason*. There is scarce a Word in our Language of a more general and uncertain Signification: It is therefore proper to give some Account of this Word.

1st, It signifies that Faculty of the Soul which is called the Understanding, whereby we are enabled to judge and determine of Things; to apprehend their natural Powers, Virtues, Operations, Differences, and Relations; which, if we be sincere and careful in our Enquiries, having no moral nor natural Indisposition, Disorder, or Bias upon our Minds, using our best Endeavours, and applying all necessary and proper Means, we shall certainly judge aright of.

2^{dly}, The Word Reason signifies Argumentation, or the Proof of Things by Arguments; showing or making them appear by stating them aright, by comparing one Thing with another, by drawing Inferences from them, and by forming Conclusions. These two joined together, the understanding Faculty and Argumentation, as are here represented, will enable us to form our Judgments right, and assist us to find out the Truth.

Every Man therefore, who is sincere in his Searches, and diligent in his Endeavours after Truth, will not only be guarded against any dangerous and fatal Mistake, but find out what will tend to his Benefit and Happiness. But as to those who do not mean well ; who are not honestly disposed, who are careless and negligent in their Enquiries after Truth ; it is no Wonder that they fall into Errors, and are involved in terrible Mistakes.

But to return : Some Men, too much inclined to a Philosophical Solution of Things, will give their Belief or Consent to no Doctrine, but what they can prove by Mathematical or strict Demonstration, by self-evident Principles. This I take to be the Reason of their Errors concerning the Mysterious Doctrine of the Trinity : But this Method of Proof is not always to be observed, because the Nature of the Subject will not always bear it ; and where it will not, there we must recede from such strict Proof. We, who believe this great Doctrine of the Trinity, are as much concerned for the Use and Authority of Reason in Controversies of Faith, as other Men. We look upon right Reason, as the native Lamp of the Soul ; placed there by our ever blessed and great Creator, to conduct us to form our Judgment right. Sound Reason, like its divine Author, never is itself deceived, nor ever deceives any Man. Revelation

velation itself is not afraid to attribute its own Credit to the Testimony of Reason; it is not unwilling to suffer itself to be tried by this approved Standard. It is Reason that distinguishes Divine Revelation from Cheat and Imposture; and by this we are assured of the Truth of the Christian Religion, and the Excellency of it, above all other Religions in the World. By Reason we are convinced of the Excellency of the Church of *England* above all other Professions among Christian People. This proves to us that it is greatly to be preferred before Popery; both in the Soundness of its Doctrine, and the Goodness of its Practice. By this noble Principle we distinguish the Excellency of our Church above all other different Persuasions and Sects among us.

So far therefore are we from contending with such Men about the Authority and Excellency of Reason; that we only differ with them about the Exercise of it, and the Extent of its Province. They stop and set Bounds to their Faith, where Reason (strictly taken) does not lead the Way, or go on before them. We, on the contrary, think, and that justly, that Reason may receive from Revelation some further Discoveries and new Prospects of Things, which it cannot discover itself, and be fully convinced of the Reality of them, though it cannot pass on, and travel over those sublime Regions,
those

those lofty Subjects, which Divine Revelation expatiates upon; though it cannot soar to the Height of those Truths, which the revealed Will of God discovers; nor advance to the utmost Bounds of them. There is certainly a great Difference between what is contrary to Reason, and what is superior to it, and out of its Reach: God is far above both Reason and Nature, which cannot assist us to comprehend him by their Authority, by their Power and Extent; yet it is not contrary either to Reason or Nature, that there is a God, an immensely great and glorious Being above us; but both evidently prove this great Truth, and afford such strong, such convincing Arguments, as leave no Room for Doubt. So that Things may be above our Reason, yet not contrary to it.

Thus again for Example: The Nature and Essence of God; his necessary Existence, his Eternity, Immutability, Independency, Immenfity, Omniscience, Omnipotence, universal Knowledge, infinite Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness are above our Reason to comprehend them: But when it is revealed to us in Scripture, that these Attributes belong to God; they are no Ways contrary to our Reason to believe them, but entirely agreeable to it. The Belief of supernatural Mysteries is founded on the Veracity and Truth of God, infinitely Wise, Omniscient, and Good; who therefore cannot be deceived himself,

himself, nor ever will deceive us ; these prevalent Arguments convince our Reason, and are sufficient to make divine Mysteries credible ; let them appear never so much above our Reason to comprehend them. We may therefore with a great deal of Reason, with great Safety, give our Assent to the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity ; notwithstanding what some weak and conceited People have alledged ; and may justly conclude that this Doctrine is not to be esteemed any Hardship, any Burden to our Minds to believe it ; seeing that Almighty God has been pleased to reveal it, who cannot deceive us, and whose Word is as infallible as his own Nature.

Men should take Care how they manage this great Province of Reason ; and not make an ill Use of it, only to serve their own unfaithful Ends. Let this noble Principle be our Guide, then we may soon reconcile all the Difficulties in Religion ; and make them sit easy upon our Minds. This will induce us to believe the great Mysteries of the Gospel, to give a ready and willing Assent to them. If we are but sincere in our Searches of divine Truths, our Reason will never destroy our Faith ; but will confirm us more stedfastly in the Profession of it.

It is the Part of Reason to consult Faith in such Points, as she of herself cannot attain to ; and Faith may safely make use of Reason

Reason in establishing her Truth and Excellency. The Christian Religion would not be reasonable, if it could not stand the Trial of Reason; nor would it be a Religion of Faith, if natural Reason or mere Reason only was concerned and laid the Foundation of it. These two joined together will not only lead us into all Truth, but continue us in the safe and secure Profession of it.

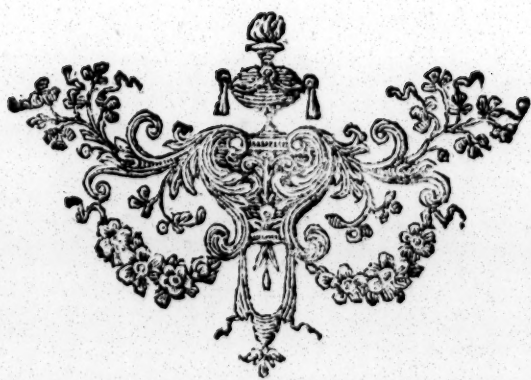
From what hath been said we plainly perceive, that our Incapacity to understand the great Mystery of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, is no sufficient Reason to induce us to disbelieve it. If therefore we have no sufficient Reason to disbelieve it, to balance the strong Reason for its Belief; we are therefore indispensibly bound to give our firm Assent to this Doctrine.

I hope I have given, notwithstanding the Prejudice and conceited Dispositions of some People, such an Account of this Mysterious Doctrine, as will satisfy any reasonable Man: Such as are unreasonable, I am not concerned with; it not being expected, that any good Effect can be wrought upon them.

I shall conclude with that excellent Collect of our Church, appointed for the Day; to keep us stedfast in the Faith of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity.

Almighty

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy Servants Grace, by the Confession of a true Faith, to acknowledge the Glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the Power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: We beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst keep us stedfast in this Faith, and evermore defend us from all Adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, World without End. *Amen.*



The

*The secret Things belong unto the LORD our GOD,
but Things revealed belong to Men:*

O R,

A DISCOURSE concerning the Myfterious
Doctrin of the ever Blessed and Glorious
TRINITY.

DEUT. XXIX. 29.

*The secret Things belong unto the Lord our God;
but those Things, which are revealed, belong
unto us, and to our Children for ever: —.*

IN discoursing upon these Words, having
first given the Meaning of them;

First, I have shewn what is revealed con-
cerning the Mystery or Doctrin of the ever
blessed and glorious Trinity; *which belongs
unto us, and to our Children for ever.*

Secondly, I have shewn what is the Mystery
or Secret contained in this Doctrin; *which
no Ways belongs to us, but only to the Lord our
God;*

God; and that our Incapacity to understand it, is no sufficient Reason to induce us to disbelieve it. I come now,

Thirdly, To answer some Objections which have been made against this Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity.

1st, It is objected, by the Author of the Pamphlet mentioned in the Preface, that the common People are made to believe that the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, or that there is only One God in Three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are all Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty, is contained in the Holy Scriptures: But because it is impossible to understand or comprehend this Doctrine, yet necessary to be believed, because God they say hath been pleased to reveal it; it is represented to be a great Mystery, something hidden, secret, and concealed, above the Reach of human Reason to find out, to understand and comprehend. And therefore to make this Doctrine sit easy upon the Minds of the People; Divines observe that there are several Things in Nature which we do not understand and comprehend, no more than we can understand and comprehend the Doctrine of the Trinity; and yet we as certainly believe them to be, as if there were no Difficulties in conceiving how they should be. Upon which Account, we ought as certainly to believe the Doctrine of the Trinity,

Trinity, which is revealed to us in Scripture ; though above our frail and fallible Reason to find out and comprehend. When the Objectors, say the orthodox Divines, have accounted for all the Myſteries of Nature ; let them object againſt the Doctrinè of the Trinity, that it is a Myſtery, and contains Abſurdity and Contradiſtion. But till they account for the former, it is an unreaſonable Attempt, a daring Impiety to inſiſt on the latter. It muſt be confeſſed, ſay the Objectors, that this is a moſt plauſible Pretence ; the ſtrongeſt Hold, as well as the laſt Refort of our Oppoſers : When we have drove them from all other Poſts, they then take Sanctuary here. To make a Reply : I have already proved from Scripture, from plain and evident Paſſages of it, the Doctrinè of the Trinity ; ſo that every Chriſtian Perſon is obliged to believe this Doctrinè upon the Account of his Salvation, and whoever diſbelieves it, muſt diſbelieve it at his Peril : *He, that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting Life ; and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life ; but the Wrath of God abideth on him : John iii. 36.* Here is no Impoſition upon any Perſon, nothing to induce him to believe a Doctrinè which he ſhould not believe ; but only religious Inducement to believe what is neceſſary to his Happineſs. *There were falſe Prophets alſo among the People, ſays St Peter, even as there ſhall be falſe Teachers among you ;*

who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction: 2 Pet. ii. 1. I hope every Person will lay Strefs upon the infallible Word of God, which can no Ways deceive him, and by which he will be judged hereafter.

2dly, As to the Mysteries of Nature, and the Use which orthodox Christians make of them in their Disputes about the Mysteries of Religion. I acknowledge with the Objectors that this is a strong Hold; and I will venture to affirm, that it is more than a plausible Pretence; it is *argumentum ad Hominem*, or a proper Argument made use of against those that deny Mysteries in Religion. Whether it is the first or last Resort is nothing to the Purpose; if it is a strong Hold, and a good Resort, that is sufficient; though there are other Resorts to repair to in this Dispute. However, it is such a Sanctuary, or Place of Refuge, as I believe will not easily be given up and parted with. The Use that I have made of this Argument in the foregoing Part of this Discourse, is I think to the Purpose; it is a strong Hold, it is sound Reasoning, and cannot easily be confuted: It may, I may venture to affirm, be made use of with good Success in discoursing upon the great Mysteries of Religion; particularly upon this of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity.

3dly,

3dly, As to the Word Mystery. Mystery signifies something secret, hidden, or concealed; above the Reach of human Reason to find out, to understand and comprehend. In this respect there are Mysteries in Nature, and Mysteries in Religion. As to the First; the Objectors themselves believe that there are many Mysteries in Nature*, which no human Reason can give an Account of; several of which I have already mentioned in this Discourse. There are likewise Mysteries in Religion, which no human Reason can give an Account of; *secret Things that belong only unto the Lord our God*; which we cannot understand and comprehend: As the Incarnation†, Trinity, and Resurrection; the Attributes of God, the working of Miracles, and that surprising Mystery or Secret mentioned by St Peter, *that one Day is with the Lord as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years as one Day*: 2 Pet. iii. 8. These are Mysteries or Secrets of Religion, unintelligible Points, required as Articles of Faith, necessary to be believed; and yet no mortal Man can understand, comprehend, or explain them. The Question therefore may be asked by the Objectors to the Doctrine of the Trinity; doth

* Page 31 of the Pamphlet.

† The Incarnation, or God becoming Man; taking human Nature into a strict Union with the Divine, assuming our frail and mortal Flesh; personally uniting a finite to an infinite Nature, making only one Person.

any Man believe Mysteries contrary to his Reason, and the Reason of all other Men * ? The Mysteries abovementioned are revealed in Scripture ; it is not contrary to any Man's Reason to give Assent to them, only above his Reason to comprehend them ; but being revealed by Almighty God, who is Truth itself, and cannot deceive any Man, it is entirely agreeable to Reason to believe these Mysteries, though Reason itself cannot understand and comprehend them.

2^{dly}, It is objected, that, under the Pretence of Mystery, we may as well believe the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, as that of the Trinity. The Papist, for Example, does with equal Colour alledge this Pretence for Transubstantiation. He says, it is a Scripture-doctrine, delivered in these express Words, *This is my Body* : And how many Things are there in the Works of Nature, which we comprehend not, no more than we can comprehend the Miracle or Mystery of Transubstantiation ; and yet we believe them as assuredly, as if there was no Difficulty in conceiving how they should be, or that they can be ? Thus, says the Objector, do the Papists argue ; and I deny, that this Pretence can be wrested from them by any Trinitarian ; for it is the same Defence that the Trinitarian makes for his Doctrine of the Trinity. Yet notwithstanding the Assurance of the Objector, and

* Page 31 of the Pamphlet.

and the Denial he makes ; I pretend to give such an Answer as will satisfy any reasonable Person. The Objector perhaps might imagine that he might impose upon the Understanding of ignorant and illiterate People, who are not acquainted with Subjects of this Nature ; but there are some Trinitarians, who can give a satisfactory Answer to this Objection.

1st, There is great Difference between the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Doctrine of Transubstantiation ; the Doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in Scripture, as I have already shewn in this Discourse ; the Doctrine of Transubstantiation is not revealed in Scripture ; and therefore there is not equal Colour for Pretence of Mystery. These Words, *This is my Body*, do not prove the Doctrine of Transubstantiation ; no more than *the seven good Ears of Corn* are literally *seven Years* : Gen. xli. 26. Our blessed Saviour says, *I am the Door* ; John x. 9. *I am the true Vine*, and *my Father is the Husbandman* ; *ye are the Branches* ; John xv. 1, 5. with several other like Expressions in Scripture. But no Person of common Reason and ordinary Capacity was ever so mad as to pretend to understand these Words in a literal Sense ; and from thence conclude that our Saviour was really a *Door*, a *Vine*, his Father an *Husbandman*, and we the *Branches* ; though these Passages of Scripture are as plain and express to prove

these Points, as these Words, *this is my Body*, are to prove Transubstantiation. These are figurative Expressions, such as are frequently made use of in common Speech and ordinary Conversation; they abound in all Languages, and particularly in the Language of Scripture: And none, but very absurd and silly People through Ignorance, and deceitful People out of Interest, pretend to interpret such Passages in a literal Sense.

2dly, The Doctrine of the Trinity is not the Object of our Senses; but the Doctrine of Transubstantiation manifestly is.

The Doctrine of the Trinity we cannot understand and comprehend: We cannot explain in what Manner a Trinity of Persons, who are all Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty, is reconcileable with the Unity of God. This is a great Mystery, a great Secret in the Christian Religion, what we cannot understand. We may as reasonably imagine, that we can contain the Ocean *in the Hollow of our Hand*; as think we can fully and perfectly comprehend the infinitely great and glorious God by our finite and shallow Understanding. God only knows and comprehends his own Nature; and what we know of the divine Perfection, is what God hath been graciously pleased to reveal to us; and what he hath revealed, we are bound to believe. But those Things which are not revealed, are *secret Things, and belong only unto*
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the Lord our God; and such Things as Men must not pretend to know and comprehend.

I hope I have said enough already in this Discourse to correct the Pride and Arrogance of some Men, and therefore I need not here add any Thing further upon this Point. But when we discourse about Transubstantiation, it is a quite different Case; the Trinity is not the Object of our Senses, nor can we by any Means comprehend this Doctrine. The Doctrine of Transubstantiation is the Object of our Senses, and must be judged of by their Report; what Information our Senses give us, we must believe it, firmly adhering to it. Our Senses inform us, that what Papists call Flesh and Blood, is really Bread and Wine; and therefore whatever Papists affirm, we must believe the Report of our Senses, in an Affair that is the Object of our Senses. There is nothing that we can more easily distinguish than Flesh and Blood, and Bread and Wine, and the Difference between them; being Things that daily fall under our Senses, and requiring no Niceness of Judgment to make a Determination. Our Senses were given us on Purpose, to make a Judgment about the Objects of Sense. St *Paul* proves the Resurrection of our blessed Saviour, the great Hinge upon which the Truth of the Christian Religion turns, from the Evidence of Sense; from the Evidence of those who actually saw him, after he rose

from the Dead : 1 *Cor.* xv, &c. Our blessed Saviour himself appealed to the Senses of *Thomas*, one of his Apostles, for the Truth of his Resurrection. From whence I conclude that the Evidence of Sense is undoubtedly certain ; if so, the Doctrine of Transubstantiation is as undoubtedly false ; contrary both to Scripture and Reason, and the common Notions of unprejudiced People : Consequently, it is no Mystery, but an Object of our Senses ; which entirely give their Verdict against the Truth of it. These Things being thus ; we have not as good Reason to believe the pretended Doctrine of Transubstantiation upon the Account of Mystery or upon any other Account, as to believe the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity. I therefore appeal to all unprejudiced and understanding People ; whether the Pretence of Mystery for the Belief of Transubstantiation is not reasonably and truly wrested from the Papist, and that he must not ever again make use of this Argument in so bad a Cause. I should have been ashamed to have put these Doctrines upon the same Level, or even so much as to have named them together ; if the Objector had not done it : But as he has done it, I am obliged to follow him ; in order to give an Answer to the Objection.

3^{dly}, It is objected ; That the Doctrine of the Trinity contains Absurdity and Contradiction : Because it maintains that three divine

vine Persons, or three distinct Almighty and All-knowing Persons, should be but one Almighty, but one All-knowing, or but one God ; a Man, who considers but with never so little Intention and Sincerity, clearly sees that it cannot be : In short ; that it is not a Mystery, but an Absurdity and a Contradiction.

I cannot possibly here perceive any Contradiction, though I consider it with Intention and Sincerity : Had it been asserted that three divine Persons, or three distinct Almighty and All-knowing Persons, are one divine Person ; it had been a manifest Absurdity and a gross Contradiction. But that three divine Persons, or three distinct Almighty and All-knowing Persons are but one Almighty, but one All-knowing, or but one God ; is indeed a Proposition, which I must confess is above the Capacity of our shallow Understanding to comprehend ; but is by no Means a Contradiction. The divine Nature or Essence in the Deity being infinite and necessarily existent, is but one, though there are three distinct Persons in it ; and therefore the three Persons, who have one and the same divine Nature or Essence common to them all, may make or constitute one Deity or Godhead, without any Manner of Contradiction. If the Scriptures had asserted that Three are One in the same respect, as our Reason informs us Three are not One ;
if

if the Scriptures had said that three Persons are one Person, and Reason assures us that three Persons are not one Person; then Scripture and Reason had contradicted each other: But when the Scripture asserts that three Persons are one in Essence, and Reason does not and cannot say the contrary, but only assures us that three Persons are not one Person; the Verdict of Scripture and Reason are very consistent with each other; because it is no Contradiction to affirm, that they are Three in one Respect, and One in another: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are Three as to Persons, and but One as to Essence; this is what the Scripture expressly asserts, *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One*: 1 John v. 7. And therefore these three divine Persons make or constitute one Deity or Godhead, or are only one Eternal, Almighty, ever blessed, and glorious God. This Proposition is no Contradiction, but only above our Reach to comprehend it; the Scripture no where asserts or maintains that three Persons are one Person, but that three Persons are one in Essence, or are one God; which Assertion is no Contradiction at all. I do not pretend to explain this Mystery, but only to vindicate it from the Charge of Absurdity and Contradiction. Whatever Doctrine is contained in Scripture, we can give such an Account of it from
 Scripture,

Scripture, as that no Person can charge it with Absurdity and Contradiction. And though our Reason cannot soar so high as to discover the more lofty Doctrines of divine Revelation; yet when Almighty God hath been pleased to discover and reveal them, we can prove that it is not contrary to Reason to believe them, but entirely agreeable to it; nay, contrary to Reason not to believe them. Let then the most sincere Person in the World carefully weigh with great Intention this fundamental Article of the Christian Faith; and I am sure he cannot with any Appearance of Reason charge it with Absurdity and Contradiction.

4thly, It is objected, but I think the Objection is of no great Consequence; but for fear it may startle and puzzle the more ignorant or less learned Part of Mankind, it may not be improper to return an Answer to it. It is objected, that Men can love God the Father with all their Hearts and Strengths, and two Persons distinct from him with the same All: They can give all to one, and all to another, and all to a Third; and never question the Possibility of it: As if there were a Trinity in Unity in every Man; that his own Heart were three Hearts, to be bestowed all and entirely upon each of the three Objects, and yet but one Heart still. To this Objection I return this Answer:

Almighty

Almighty God commanded his People to love him with the highest of their Affections, and their Neighbours as themselves. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might; Deut. vi. 4, 5.* That is, with all the Faculties and Powers both of Body and Soul; with the whole Man. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself: Lev. xix. 18.* Now no Person ever thought or imagined, nor does the Scripture suppose it, that a Man must have two Hearts; one to love the Lord his God with the highest of his Affections, and another to love his Neighbour as himself. Our blessed Saviour commands us *to love our Enemies*, as well as our Neighbours or our Friends: *Matt. v. 43, 44.* And though it be a much more difficult Thing to love an Enemy than a Friend, or than to love our Neighbours as ourselves; and if any Instance of Duty requires two Hearts to perform it, we may justly conclude that this does. Yet here is no Supposition of two Hearts, and our own Reason tells us, that one Heart well disposed will serve to fulfil the divine Command. We know in ourselves, that one *honest and good Heart*, as our blessed Saviour expresses it, *Luke viii. 15.* religiously inclined, is sufficient to answer as far as is required all the Purposes of Duty, we owe both to God and Man. And therefore though there are three
Persons

Persons in the Deity or Godhead, and but one Heart in Man; yet one religious Heart, which has a Sense of Gratitude, will enlarge itself as far as it is capable in this imperfect State, to love the ever blessed and glorious Trinity with the highest Affection, for the surprising and wonderful Love of God to Mankind; though if we had Ten thousand Hearts apiece to offer in Sacrifice out of Gratitude to the divine Love, they would not be enough to make suitable Returns for the divine Goodness towards us. As Almighty God is the best of all Beings, so he ought to have the best of our Service; the Flower of our Youth, the Strength of our Manhood, and the Steadiness of our Old Age. No Sacrifice, that we can present to Almighty God, is scarce good enough to offer to his divine Majesty; infinitely Glorious, infinitely Good, and infinite in Perfections. As therefore one Heart is required to love God and our Neighbour, to love Enemies as well as Friends; so one Heart, an Heart undivided, is required to love the ever blessed and glorious Trinity: To love God the Father for our Creation, and for giving his Son to be our Saviour; God the Son for dying for us, for redeeming us from Death and Destruction; and God the Holy Ghost for giving Assistance to this wonderful and surprising Work, for sanctifying the People of God, and for comforting and guiding the Faithful. Upon which Accounts;

counts, let us in the Language of Scripture, *with one Heart and one Soul*, Acts iv. 32. *with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; Rom. xv. 6. and Jesus Christ the Son of God; and the Holy Ghost, the blessed Spirit of God: Saying in those divine Words of Scripture; *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*: Rev. v. 13.

There are some other Objections, which I must endeavour to remove: As in the Trinity there are three Persons, who make the Deity or Godhead, all of whom are stiled *God*; and consequently of equal Power, Authority, and Duration; so there are some Passages in Scripture, which seem at first View to disparage or derogate from the Divinity of our blessed Saviour, and which several People, who are no Favourers of our Lord's Divinity, are apt to lay Stress upon: These I am obliged, in regard to this most important Subject, to take Notice of, and to give a just and true Account of them.

1st, In order to this Purpose, I desire that it may be taken into Consideration, in regard to the Truth I am obliged to lay Stress upon, that our blessed Saviour consists of two Natures; a Divine, and a Human. This Distinction, which is true, will solve several Difficulties, will answer several Objections, and is a Point which the Scriptures acquaint

us with. We are informed in Scripture that *Jesus*, in respect to his human Nature, *increased in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with God and Man*: Luke ii. 52. And yet it is the same *Jesus*, unto whom the Father saith, in regard to his divine Nature; *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*: Heb. i. 8. St Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, thus expresses himself, *Concerning the Son of God Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the Seed of David according to the Flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead*: Rom. i. 3, 4. And in another Place; *Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen*: Rom. ix. 5. From these Passages of Scripture it is evident, that our blessed Saviour has both a divine and human Nature, that he is perfect God and perfect Man; this Distinction gives an easy and satisfactory Account how Christ is more than the Son of *David*, more than a mere Man, as our blessed Saviour argued with the Pharisees: *Matt. xxii. 41, &c.* As Christ is Man, He is *David's Son*; as Christ is God, He is *David's Lord and Sovereign, Creator and Redeemer*. These Things being considered; when our blessed Saviour says *I can of mine own self do nothing*, John v. 19, 30. *I do always those Things that please the Father*, John viii. 29. *My Father is greater than I*, John xiv. 28. *I ascend*

ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God, John xx. 17. And the Son knoweth not of the Day of Judgment, *Mark* xiii. 32. and such like Expressions in Scripture; they do not derogate any Thing from our Saviour's Divinity, but are spoken with regard to his human Nature, which he assumed for our Salvation; as he is the blessed Messiah, our Mediator and Redeemer, the Messenger, Minister, and Servant of God, sent on Purpose to accomplish the Salvation of Mankind. As our blessed Saviour took upon him our Nature, *Heb.* ii. 16. he might very properly and justly speak in this Manner. As he is Man, he did not know of the Day of Judgment, and therefore in the Capacity of the Messiah he might very truly say, that the Son knoweth not of the Day of Judgment. As the Day of Judgment is kept by Almighty God as a Secret to himself; so it is no Part of the prophetic Office of any Person, nor within the Commission of Christ to reveal it; he had received no Instructions about it, nor as Man or as the Messiah, the Anointed of God, his Messenger to the World, had he any Knowledge of it. But though Christ as Man did not know of the Day of Judgment; yet as God, as to his divine Nature, he had certain Knowledge of it; and in this Passage of Scripture he does not exclude the Knowledge of his Divinity, but only the Knowledge of his Manhood, of his Mediator-

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may be sure our blessed Saviour would not have made use of, if he is not God as well as Man ; if he has not a divine as well as a human Nature. I hope what I have said upon these Passages of Scripture, will be sufficient to enable us to solve other difficulties of the like Nature : As *Matt. xx. 23. John v. 30. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.*

2dly, It is objected, by what our blessed Saviour said to the young Man in the Gospel, that he is not God, or has not the divine Nature residing him ; because he said unto him, *Why callest thou me Good ? There is none good but One, that is God : Matt. xix. 17.* By these Words the Objectors say, that our Saviour denies himself to be God by denying himself to be Good, which is the proper Title that belongs to God. Our blessed Saviour did not deny himself to be God, or tell the young Man that he is not God ; but he asks him the Reason why he called him Good, when he did not acknowledge him to be God ; why he gave him that Title that properly belongs to God, when he looked upon him very likely to be only a mere Man. And therefore our blessed Saviour seems here to reprove this young Man for giving him the Title of Good, which only belongs to God, when he did not confess him to be God ; upon which Account he did not act a right and consistent Part. This being the true Meaning of this Passage, there is nothing that

that seems to intimate that our Saviour disclaimed the Title of God.

3dly, It is objected, that our Saviour is not God, because he tells us himself; *This is Life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: John xvii. 3. Our blessed Saviour here calls God his Father the only true God, in Opposition to Idols and false Gods, Gods improperly so called: He does not exclude himself from being God, but only the Vanities of the Heathen; and therefore this Passage of Scripture does not any Ways invalidate our Saviour's Divinity. There is a great Difference in these Expressions; the Father is *the only true God*, and the Father only is true God: Our Saviour here asserts that the Father is *the only true God*, in Opposition to the false Deities of the Heathen; he doth not say, that the Father only is the true God, which Expressions would seem to exclude him from a Share in the Deity; but the Father is *the only true God*, which by no Means excludes him from it. Besides, our blessed Saviour makes eternal Life to depend as well upon the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, as upon the Knowledge of *the only true God*; which Circumstance sufficiently proves that Jesus Christ is more than Man, no less than God; because the Knowledge of a Creature, though never so excellent and glorious, cannot be looked upon so necessary to eternal Life, as the Knowledge

of the ever blessed and eternal God; the Knowledge of whom is Life and Happiness itself. And therefore if our Happiness depends upon the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, as well as upon the Knowledge of *the only true God*; nothing is more evident, than that *the only true God and Christ Jesus* are of the same Nature and Essence, that Christ Jesus is God equal in Power and Authority with *the only true God*, and equally disposes of eternal Life and Happiness with him.

4thly, It is objected; that our Saviour is not God, because St Paul tells the *Corinthians*, *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in him*: 1 Cor. viii. 6. These Words seem to confine the Deity to the Father, and to exclude the Son from having any Share in it. The Word *God* is here applied to the Father, as being the Fountain of the Deity, the first Person in the Godhead, and doth not exclude the Son from being God. That this is St Paul's Meaning is evident from what follows; *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things, and we by him*: 1 Cor. viii. 6. As St Paul here ascribes to God the Father the Works of Creation, *of whom are all Things, and we in him*; so he ascribes the same Works to the Son, *one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things, and we by him*. As he here calls the Father God, so he calls Jesus Christ Lord. St Paul

Paul in this Passage is therefore so far from excluding Jesus Christ to be God, that he manifestly includes him, and gives him a Share in the Deity, by ascribing the Works of Creation to him. What *St Paul* here instructs the *Corinthians* in, and us with them, is, that there is but *one God*, in Opposition to the many false Gods of the Heathen, *ver. 5.* and that the Father is the Fountain of the Deity; and that there *is one Lord Jesus Christ, but one Mediator between God and Man*, in Opposition to the many Mediators of the same superstitious People. The Apostle here by no Means excludes Jesus Christ from being a Person in the Deity, but only asserts that the Father is the first Person, and the Fountain of the Godhead. If *St Paul* here excludes Christ Jesus from being God by the Expressions he makes use of, this will prove more than those that differ from us will allow of; this Method of reasoning will prove that God the Father is not Lord. If the Expressions of *one God the Father* exclude Christ Jesus from being *God*; then the Expressions of *one Lord Jesus Christ*, according to this Way of arguing, exclude God the Father from being *Lord*, or having Dominion over all Things. As it is Blasphemy to make this Assertion concerning God the Father, so it is no less Blasphemy to exclude Christ Jesus from being God.

5thly, St Paul tells the *Corinthians* that *the Head of Christ is God*; 1 Cor. xi. 3. and therefore Christ is not God, as having a Head above him. This Objection is of no great Weight, and is easily removed. As Christ is Man and Mediator, he is inferior to the Father, and God is the Head of Christ; but as to his divine Nature, he is equal to the Father, and of the same Power and Authority with him. And therefore in the Words of the Athanasian Creed; “ Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; but inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.” The Apostle here says, that *the Head of the Woman is the Man*; and *the Head of Christ is God*. As the Woman is of the same Nature with the Man, who is the Head of the Woman; so Christ is of the same Nature with God, who is here said to be the Head of Christ.

6thly and lastly, It is objected, that Christ is not God, because he is placed in the Rank of Creatures, and reckoned among them; St Paul calls him *the first-born of every Creature*, Colof. i. 15. and therefore they say that Christ is in the Condition of created Beings. St Paul here says, that our Saviour is *the first-born of every Creature*, and gives the Reason in the following Verses; *For by him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all Things*

Things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist: ver. 16, 17. If Christ Jesus created all Things, and he is before all Things, as the Apostle here asserts, then he was before all Creatures, and created all Creatures, and consequently cannot be a Creature himself; unless any Person will be so inconsistent as to say that he made himself; which is a manifest Contradiction, because he must then have a Being and not a Being at the same Time. When therefore St Paul says that Christ *is the first-born of every Creature*, he means that he had a Being before all Creatures, and was the Creator of them, the Lord of the whole Creation; and consequently *is over all, God blessed for ever: Amen. Rom. ix. 5.* *The first-born of every Creature*, or of the whole Creation, may signify, that Christ is the Beginning of the Creation. In the Beginning, when all Things had their Being, Christ was the Beginning, the First, the Principal, the Chief, and efficient Cause of the Creation; and therefore no Creature, and consequently God. *The first-born of every Creature* may likewise signify that Christ is Lord and Heir of all Things, and has as just and right a Title to be Proprietor of the whole World, being the Creator of it; as the first-born among Men have by human Laws to the Inheritance of their Fathers real Estates and Fortunes. The first-born among Men were anciently

Lords over their Brethren, and Head of the Family ; *Gen. xxvii. 37.* and therefore Christ being called *the first-born of every Creature*, may signify that he is Lord over the whole Creation, Head of the Universe, and above all Creatures. If therefore Christ is Heir of all Things, and has a supreme Power and Dominion over them, being sovereign Proprietor of the whole Universe by a divine Right, he is more than a Creature, no less than God.

I have now returned Answers to the most material Objections that are made against our blessed Saviour's Divinity ; and I hope I have not only given a just and true Account of them, reasonable and satisfactory Answers, but from what hath been said we shall be enabled, with proper Application, to give an Answer to all other Objections of the like Nature. Suppose we could not give a full Answer to all the Objections that are raised against our blessed Saviour's Divinity, there is no Reason that this Inability should shake our Faith ; because there are several Passages of Scripture, that in express and direct Terms assert this most important Doctrine. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder ; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace : Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End, upon the Throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and*
establish

establiſh it with Judgment and with Juſtice,
from henceforth even for ever : Ifai. ix. 6, 7.
In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word
was with God, and the Word was God : John i. 1.
Take Heed therefore unto yourſelves, and to all the
Flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made
you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which
he hath purchaſed with his own Blood : Acts xx.
28. And without Controverſy great is the Myſtery
of Godlineſs ; God was manifeſt in the Fleſh :
1 Tim. iii. 16. In him dwelleth all the Fulneſs of
the Godhead bodily : Colof. ii. 9. Unto the Son he
ſaith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever :
Heb. i. 8. Beſides, Chriſt has a Right to di-
vine Worſhip, and Prayer of right is to be
directed unto him. When he bringeth in the
fiſt-begotten into the World, he ſaith, And let all
the Angels of God worſhip him : Heb. i. 6. Then
they that were in the Ship, came and worſhipped
him, ſaying, Of a Truth, Thou art the Son of
God : Matt. xiv. 33. And it came to paſs, while
he bleſſed them, he was parted from them, and
carried up into Heaven : And they worſhipped
him, and returned to Jeruſalem with great Joy :
Luke xxiv. 51, 52. Prayer of right is to be
directed to Chriſt Jeſus, as being the proper
Object of religious Worſhip ; And the Apoſtles
ſaid unto the Lord, Increate our Faith : Luke
xvii. 5. And they ſtoned Stephen, calling upon
God, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus, receive my Spirit :
Acts vii. 59. Now God himſelf, and our Father,
and

and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our Way unto you : 1 Thess. iii. 11. 2 Cor. xii. 8.

Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Eternity are likewise attributed to Christ Jesus in the Scripture; *And Jesus, knowing their Thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye Evil in your Hearts? Matt. ix. 4. Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all Men: And needed not that any should testify of Man; for he knew what was in Man: John ii. 24, 25.* To know the Thoughts of Men and the Secrets of the Heart, is the sole Prerogative, and the undeniable Property of God alone: And therefore the Scripture acquaints us concerning Almighty God; *Thou, even thou only knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men: 1 Kings viii. 39.* And therefore our Saviour is God in relation to his Omniscience. The same may be said as to his Omnipotence; *As the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickneth them; even so the Son quickneth whom he will: John v. 21.* To raise the Dead is an Act of Omnipotence, and the Prerogative of God only; if therefore Christ Jesus has a Power to raise or quicken the Dead, as the Scripture asserts, then he is truly and properly God. As to Christ's Eternity; *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty: Rev. i. 8.* The same Title and Character that were given to the Father at the fourth Verse, are here given to the Son by
our

our Saviour himself in this Verse, and in the 11th: See all to 18. The same Attributes of Eternity being here given both to the Father and the Son, prove both the Father and the Son to be eternal, and consequently God. If some People will not believe the Son to be eternal in the proper Sense of the Word from those Passages in Scripture, which attribute Eternity to him; they may not believe, but make a Doubt whether the Father be eternal. Such People as these interpret away all manner of Truth, and leave us nothing in the Room of it but their own vain and wild Fancies. So that though we could not fully answer all the Objections that are brought against our blessed Saviour's Divinity; yet by what we find in Scripture concerning him, by those divine Attributes that are given to him, we must acknowledge that he is God, that he has a Share in the Deity, and that *all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*: John v. 23. It has been objected, that the Holy Ghost is not a Person, but a Virtue or Power of God, shewing itself in many wonderful Operations: But from what is said in Scripture, it appears that the Holy Ghost is not only a Person, but is likewise stiled *God*: Matt. xxviii. 19. John xiv. 26. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Acts v. 3, 4.

The Word *begotten*, as applied to our blessed Saviour, seems to fit uneasy upon some
 People's

People's Minds, they cannot well reconcile it, and is apt to make them think that there is some Analogy or Relation between created and uncreated Beings; that as in created Beings the Person that begets is before the Person begotten, so they think it is the same in uncreated Beings; and that therefore the Father is before the Son.

Almighty God, being infinite in Perfections, and at an infinite Distance from all finite and created Beings, exists in a quite different Manner from them; in a Manner incomprehensible to us. When we speak of the Word *begotten* in relation to Creatures, we understand what is said; we understand that one Creature is generated or begotten by another in the ordinary Way of Generation, in the common and natural Manner of Production. But when we speak of the Word *begotten* in relation to the Son of God, who is an uncreated and infinite Being; we speak in an ineffable Manner, not after the Manner of created Beings, not in the Manner as we speak of Men, but in a Manner that cannot be conceived, understood, expressed, nor uttered. And the Reason why we speak in an ineffable Manner upon this most sublime Subject, is, because finite Beings can no Ways comprehend a Being that is infinite. The Word *begotten* is made use of in Scripture in relation to the Son of God, and is no Doubt designed to signify to us that Christ Jesus our
blessed

blessed Redeemer is the true natural Son of God, of the same Nature and Essence with the Father, who begot him, neither made nor created; Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty: As one Man, begotten by another, is of the same Nature with him that begat him. But how or in what Manner the Son of God is begotten of God, or received his divine Nature from the Father; or how he can be said to be begotten, and the Father not before him, is such a Mystery or Secret as we can no Ways explain, define, understand, nor conceive. Though we cannot explain nor understand this great Mystery, yet we may safely make use of Similitudes to shew that there is no Contradiction nor inconsistency in the Word *begotten*, as applied to the Son of God, and to make Things of this Nature to sit easy upon the Minds of Men. The Sun is the Parent of Light and Heat, which are begotten by or produced from the Sun; and yet Light and Heat are of the same Duration with the Sun, and coeval with it. So that Almighty God may have an only begotten or a begotten Son, and yet the Son may be coeval with the Father, and may be eternal as well as he; and though he is begotten, yet the Father may not be before him. We may likewise make use of a Similitude or Resemblance in relation to the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity in Unity, Three Persons but One God: The Understanding,

standing, the Memory, and the Will in the Soul or Mind of Man; these Three, though entirely distinct, make but one Soul of Man: So though there are three distinct Persons in the Deity or Godhead, yet they altogether may make but one Deity or Godhead. I do not pretend to make use of these Similitudes or Resemblances to explain what I have said concerning the Word *begotten*, and the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity; but only to shew that there is no Contradiction nor Inconsistency in these most sublime Points of Divinity, and to make them sit easy upon the Minds of some People, who are no Favourers of the common Way of Thinking, and of the common Belief.

The Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity hath been spoken against, both in ancient and modern Times; and will very like be spoken against and opposed, by Pretenders to Wit and Reason, and perhaps by some learned Men, in Time to come: But as Almighty God hath been pleased to stir up and assist well-meaning Men to vindicate and defend this Doctrine in Times that are past; so it is not to be doubted but he will stir up and assist well-meaning Men to vindicate and defend it in Times to come; whenever it is spoken against and opposed. The Ministers of the Gospel, who have a sincere Regard to the Honour and Glory of God and the Good of Religion, with other well-meaning Christian

tian People, cannot but in Reason and Conscience defend and support this Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity against all Opposition; when they seriously consider, that the Scripture in several Places asserts that *the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God*; and yet the same Scripture in several Places asserts, that *there is but one God*; though they cannot comprehend this mysterious Doctrine, nor any Ways explain it. This however is an immoveable Rock to fix upon; here we can firmly stand, nothing can shake it. Those, that maintain this Doctrine, are like *to a wise Man, who built his House upon a Rock: And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock: Matt. vii. 24, 25. Let us then, in the Language of Scripture, watch, stand fast in the Faith, quit ourselves like Men, be strong: 1 Cor. xvi. 13.* This Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity has stood the Test of Ages, and has Strength enough of itself, being rightly managed according to Scripture and Reason, to support it to the End of the World. And though some Men of Wit and Learning have several Times opposed it, have impugned and kicked against it; notwithstanding *it is hard for them to kick against the Pricks; Acts ix. 5,* yet the Church of Christ still maintains the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, and looks
upon

upon it as a fundamental Article of Christian Faith.

I have shewn that the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity is revealed in Scripture. I have shewn that our Incapacity to understand, is no sufficient Reason to induce us to disbelieve it. I have likewise answered several Objections that have been made against this Doctrine: And I hope, notwithstanding the Prejudice and conceited Disposition of some People, I have given such an Account of this Mysterious Doctrine, as will satisfy any reasonable Man. Such as are unreasonable, I am not concerned with; it not being expected that any good Effect can be wrought upon them. I come now,

4thly and *lastly*, To make some Reflections, and so conclude.

First, In all our Enquiries into the Doctrines of revealed Religion, we should follow the plain and obvious Sense of the Sacred Writings; which are the only Rule of Faith, designed to instruct Men in the Truth, not to delude and deceive them. All unnatural and far-fetched Constructions ought to be carefully avoided; as tending more to create Divisions among Christians, than to give them Assistance to find out the Truth. The Sacred Writings should be treated as the Oracles of God; with all the Reverence, Simplicity, and Uprightness imaginable. Nothing should
here

here be attempted through Envy or vain Strife, *handling the Word of God deceitfully*; as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. iv. 2. but all sincere Endeavours used to explain the true Sense and Meaning of it. Those Passages of Scripture, which are difficult to be understood, ought to be interpreted by such as are less difficult to common Apprehension, or are easy to be understood by it. Had these Rules been carefully observed; we should not have had such hot Disputes about our blessed Saviour's Incarnation, the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Miracles of our blessed Lord. Men would religiously have agreed in their Sentiments about these important Points, and not have used their Endeavours to subvert their Fellow-Christians. The Doctrines of the Gospel would have appeared in the same Plainness in which they were revealed, and would have remained pure from Corruption. But as long as Men are evil inclined, they may torture and wrest the Sacred Writings, not only to their own, but to others Destruction; who are so indiscreet and unstedfast, as to be led away from the Truth by their vicious Suggestions. Though all Things necessary to Salvation are revealed in Scripture in a plain and intelligible Manner, and may be found out with a very moderate Share of Learning; such as low Capacities may attain to: Yet several Men have

obscured the plain Doctrines of the Gospel, and have thereby much perplexed and confounded the Minds of Christians. If therefore we would preserve ourselves from being led away by the Error of the Wicked, from falling from our own Stedfastness; we must beware of such false Instructors, such false Dealers; and give a diligent Attention to the plain Declarations of God's most holy Word, revealed in the Sacred Writings: And if this is done out of a conscientious and religious View, we shall, by the Grace of God, keep ourselves from falling into dangerous Errors.

2dly, As to those Mysteries or Secrets contained in the Gospel, we must not attempt to explain them; or pretend to understand how or in what Manner they can be: These *secret Things* can only *belong unto the Lord our God*; they being far out of the Reach of human Capacity, the shallow Understanding of Man.

Though Attempts may successfully be made to make this Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity to sit easy upon the Minds of Men, to reconcile them to the Difficulties and Mystery of it; yet all Pretensions of unfolding or explaining this Mystery are unwarrantable; because it can never be made by human Learning more plain than it is. It will always remain what it is, a Mystery or Secret; and as such it ought to have great
Deference

Deference and Respect paid to it. I am apt to think that Men have fallen into Errors, by attempting to explain the Mysteries of the Gospel, by going beyond their Reach and Knowledge. Some Christian Divines have committed grievous Errors about the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, by attempting to explain that Doctrine, which cannot be explained ; we must therefore imagine that terrible Mistakes must be committed by such inconsistent Proceeding. If this be the fatal Consequence of such an Enterprize, we ought all of us religiously to desist from it. Others, through Pride and Conceit, who do not mean well, will not believe as other People believe ; nor go in the same common Path with the Generality of Mankind. But let us, who I hope mean well, believe and practise as the Generality of the People believe and practise ; so they believe and practise Right. Do not let common Notions hinder us from believing the common and Catholic Faith, which is necessary to Salvation. Some again, who pretend to solve all Things by Reason, to prove them by strict Demonstration, will not believe the Doctrine of the Trinity ; because they cannot solve it by Reason, they cannot comprehend and understand it : And this perhaps may be the Foundation both of Arianism and Socinianism ; and the Reason of misinterpreting several Places of Scripture,

which have Relation to the Divinity of our blessed Saviour, and to the Doctrine of the Trinity.

For *Arius*, who lived in the fourth Century, and published his Errors in the Beginning of it, about the Year 318, very likely conceiving that it was a most surprising and unaccountable Thing, that God should become Man or be manifest in the Flesh, made this unjust and impious Conclusion; “ That
 “ the Word or Son of God was a Creature
 “ produced out of nothing, a precarious and
 “ dependent Being, of a Substance different
 “ from the Father, and that he had a Beginning.” But as the Word *God* is attributed in Scripture to our blessed Saviour, so the Arians must allow him to be God; and so they do, but not the supreme God, but an inferior God: So that they make two Gods, a Greater and a Less, a Supreme and an Inferior God; that is, they esteem our blessed Saviour as no God at all; they reduce him to a mere Creature, but more than Man, a very excellent and glorious Being, who had Existence before the Creation of the World, and deprive him of his Share in the Deity or Godhead. As to the Notion of two Gods, a Supreme and an Inferior God, a created God; this is such a Position as is contrary to all Sense and Reason, and the greatest Absurdity and Contradiction in the
 World:

World : A made or an appointed God is no God at all. Thus far as to Arianism.

As to *Socinianism*; *Lælius Socinus*, who published his Errors near the Middle of the Sixteenth Century, about the Year 1546, which were afterwards maintained by *Faustus Socinus* his Nephew, in the same Century in the Year 1555, very likely considering that our blessed Saviour being subject to the Infirmities of our weak and frail Nature, and being *in all Points tempted like as we are*, as the Apostle expresses it, *Heb. iv. 15.* as unjustly and impiously concluded; “ That Christ Jesus was
 “ only a meer Man, and had no Divinity
 “ residing in him: That he had no Existence
 “ or Being, except in the Womb, before he
 “ was born of the Virgin *Mary* by the Power
 “ of the Holy Ghost; and that the Holy
 “ Ghost is not a Person, but a Virtue or
 “ Power of God, shewing itself in many
 “ wonderful Operations.” To this Purpose and Effect were the Tenets of the Socinians in general, for they were not all of the same Mind; some were so bold as to affirm that Jesus Christ ought not to be called God; others did not absolutely deny the Incarnation, but embraced the Errors of the Arians.

And I am of Opinion, that several of the Followers of these Sects, whether ancient or modern, notwithstanding their Pretensions, have split upon the same unhappy Rock of solving all Things by Reason and strict Demonstration.

monstration. There have been of late Years great Names among us on this Side of the Dispute, in Favour of the Arian Opinion; but as there is no Occasion to mention their Names, so I shall make no Mention of them; not through Fear upon their Account, or Uneasiness at their Proceedings; because as they were involved in Errors, their great Names cannot support and bear them out, nor justify their Conduct. The Trinity is a Doctrine that has been spoken against both in ancient and modern Times, and very likely will be spoken against in Time to come; and therefore we all, who have Regard to our Salvation, should use our Endeavours to support this most important Doctrine of the Christian Religion. Exception need not be taken that Men of great Fame and Learning oppose the Mysteries of Religion, for such Men are often mistaken in spiritual Affairs; for their relying upon their own natural Reason, and not upon the Authority of Divine Revelation, is the true Cause of their Errors in the Mysteries of Religion, and in this most important Doctrine of the Trinity. However in a Case of this Nature, in giving Belief to this great and mysterious Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, nothing becomes us so much as Humility and Submission; paying due Reverence to the incomprehensible Nature and Perfections of the Divine Majesty of Heaven, Three Persons,

sons, but One God over all blessed for ever ;
 saying in those awful and divine Words of
 the great Apostle St Paul : *O the Depth of the
 Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God !
 How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his
 Ways past finding out !* Rom. xi. 33.

Now to God the Father, God the Son,
 and God the Holy Ghost, three Per-
 sons but one God ; unto the King eter-
 nal, immortal, invisable, the only wise
 God, be Honour and Glory, for ever
 and ever. *Amen.*



A DISCOURSE upon the CREED,
commonly called the Creed of St *Athanasius*.

I JOHN V. 7.

*There are Three that bear Record in Heaven; the
Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and
these Three are One.*

FROM these Words I shall take Occasion
to give an Account of the Confession of
our Christian Faith, commonly called the
Creed of St *Athanasius*, to remove some Dif-
ficulties contained in it, and to shew that it
is agreeable to Scripture. Some People may
be willing to hear or read a Discourse of this
Nature, having some Scruples in their Minds
about this Creed; and it may be proper so
to do, because Objections are made against
it, though it contains truly orthodox Divi-
nity. The Words of the Text are suitable
to this Purpose, because the Expressions here
made use of are somewhat like those in the
Athanasian Creed: *Three are Three that bear
Record*

*Record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One: One in Essence, Three in Persons or Relations. The Adversaries to the Doctrine of the Trinity say indeed that they are one in Testimony, but not in Essence; we on the contrary, who believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, have just Reason to say upon the Authority of Scripture, that they are not only One in Testimony, but also One in Essence; infallible in their Testimony, as being all Partakers of the same divine Nature. That these Three are One in Essence evidently appears by the following Verse, where the Phrase is altered: In the Original the Text is, "These Three are one Thing; one Substance, Nature, or Essence." In the following Verse, where Mention is made that *there are Three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood*; and the Three are to one Thing, to one Purpose or Effect; or as we translate it, *agree in One*; that is, in Testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the blessed Messiah: so that the Words of the Text prove that the Three are One in Nature or Essence. As the Essence of God, and the particular Manner of the Subsistence of the Three Persons in the Deity or Godhead cannot be comprehended by our finite Understanding, nor explained by us; so we cannot conceive nor understand how the Three different Persons in the Deity or Godhead should*

all

all have and carry on in every Respect upon the Account of being One in Essence the same Will and Designs: We cannot form any Ideas or Conceptions of this Mystery. Though among Men we all partake of the same Nature and Essence, yet our Wills and Designs are very different; and there is almost as great Variety of Opinions and Sentiments among Mankind, as of Features and Complexions. But though there be three Persons in the Deity or Godhead, different and distinct from each other; yet they all in every Respect carry on the same Will and Design; thinking and acting upon all Accounts alike without any manner of Variation, doing what is best and most fitting for the whole Creation; employing their infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness to promote these most glorious and excellent Designs. How these Things can be we can give no Account of, but this; that God is infinite in Perfection, and we are finite and frail Beings. God cannot change; he is *the same Yesterday, and to Day, and for ever*: Heb. xiii. 8. But Man is an inconstant and changeable Being, scarce ever continuing in one Stay; and therefore there is great Variety of Opinions and Sentiments, of Wills and Designs among Men; but not so in the great and glorious God, who is all Excellence, all Perfection. That Almighty God is unchangeable is owing to his infinite Perfections, but how or in what
Manner

Manner he is unchangeable, or how the Three Persons in the Deity all will and act the same Things, we cannot conceive nor understand. Most Part of this Passage of Scripture, which I have chose for the Text, I must be so impartial to acquaint you is left out in several Copies of this Epistle, which Consideration has been the Occasion of great Controversy ; but then it must be observed, that what is left out in several Copies, is likewise found in many ancient Copies ; and as it is remarked very likely more ancient than those Copies where it is not found. This Omission might happen through the Negligence of the Transcribers by the Likeness of the Words they transcribed, wrote, or copied out. And if any Persons were designedly concerned about this important Passage of Scripture ; we have more Reason to think that those, that opposed the Doctrine of the Trinity, left this remarkable Passage out, than that those, who believed it, put it in ; because other Texts of Scripture, which support sound and good Doctrine, have been so abused by perverse and evil Men, have been refused and disowned by them ; and because there are other Passages of Scripture to the same Purpose with the Text ; other Passages, that sufficiently distinguish the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the most important Concerns of Religion, and by necessary Consequence prove that they altogether

altogether make the Deity or Godhead, or are but one God, because the same Scriptures assert that there is but one God; so that according to the Text, these Three, *the Father, the Word or Son, and the Holy Ghost* are not only One in Testimony, but also One in Substance or Essence, and altogether make one God, or are one Deity or Godhead. However, we may justly conclude that those, who designedly left out this remarkable Passage in several Copies of this Epistle, were evilly inclined, and were prejudiced against the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, and by so doing they thought that they had thereby done something very detrimental to the Christian Faith. But blessed be God, the Christian Religion stands upon such a firm Foundation, as not to be shaken by the utmost Efforts of human Malice. There is no Doubt to be made, but that this Text was originally Part of the Sacred Scripture; because the ninth Verse seems to have relation to the Words of the Text: *If we receive,* says the Apostle, *the Witness of Men, the Witness of God is greater; for this is the Witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son:* 1 John v. 9. If we leave out the seventh Verse, the Words of the Text, there is no Mention in the Verses preceeding of the Witness of God the Father that Jesus Christ is his Son, the blessed Messiah, which the ninth Verse seems
to

to relate; which is the Witness of God the Father, declaring Jesus to be his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, and that he was to be heard and obeyed, mentioned before in the seventh Verse. This Declaration St *Matthew*, St *Mark*, and St *Luke* take Notice of both at the Baptism and Transfiguration of our blessed Saviour; *Matt.* iii. 16, 17. *Mark* i. 9, 10, 11. *Luke* iii. 21, 22. *Matt.* xvii. 1—6. *Mark* ix. 2—8. *Luke* ix. 28—36. which the seventh Verse seems to relate to. This Voice of God the Father from Heaven at the Transfiguration of our blessed Saviour, declaring our Lord Jesus Christ to be his beloved Son, St *John* the Author of this Epistle was an Ear-witness of; and saw the transcendent Glory in which our blessed Saviour appeared. St *Peter* likewise, who was an Ear and Eye-witness at the Transfiguration, takes Notice of it in his Second Epistle in these sublime and lofty Words. *We have not, says he, followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty. For he received from God the Father Honour and Glory, when there came such a Voice to him from the excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this Voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy Mount: 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18.* To make therefore these Passages of Scripture

ture consistent with each other, the Words of the Text I think must in Reason and Truth be allowed to be Part of the Sacred Scripture. In this Creed, which is attributed to *Athanasius*, there seems to be an Attempt to explain in some Measure the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation; and it passes a very severe Sentence against those that do not believe what is contained in it. And therefore I suppose some People are unwilling to repeat this Creed, or to join with those that do repeat it, when it is appointed to be read; upon these two following Accounts.

First, Because in the Attempt to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity, there seems to be Contradiction.

Secondly, Because this Creed so strictly requires the Belief of it, and threatens the Disbelief upon Pain of Damnation.

It is not very material to decide who was the Author of this Creed, whether *Athanasius* or any other Person; it has been and is still a Matter of Dispute, whether *Athanasius* composed it or not. Some think it probable that *Athanasius* composed it, from the Testimony of several ancient Authors: Mention is made by an ancient Author of a Gift which *Athanasius* presented to the Emperor, a Confession of his Faith, received with great Veneration both in the East and West; which Passage
many

many Authors both ancient and modern understand of this Creed.

I am apt to think that this Gift, which *Gregory Nazianzen* makes mention of, was the Form of Faith which the Emperor *Jovian* desired *Athanasius* to send him, which as a Rule might preserve him from falling into Error; and this was none other but that of the Council of *Nice* in *Bitinia*; or a Creed or Rule of Faith conformable to that of *Nice*, which the Synod summoned by *Athanasius* at *Alexandria* unanimously agreed upon, to which they all subscribed, and transmitted it to the Emperor. There are many Places in *Augustin*, which are said to be taken verbatim or Word for Word out of this Creed. Others are of Opinion, that *Athanasius* was not the Author of it; because this Creed, as has been observed, is not found in any of his Works; and because it opposes some Hereticks, who sprang up after the Time of *Athanasius*, as the Nestorians, Eutychians, and Monothelites. *Athanasius* died in the Year of our Lord 373; the Doctrine of *Nestorius* Bishop of *Constantinople* was disapproved in Council 430, *Eutychius* a Priest was accused in a Council held in 448; the Monothelites appeared about the Year 620, at the Head of whom was *Theodorus* Bishop of *Pharan*: So that the Creed, commonly called the Creed of St *Athanasius*, according to this
Way

Way of arguing could not be composed by him, because it formally opposes those Errors that sprung up after *Athanasius's* Time, but must have been composed by some other Person or Persons after his Time, when these Heretics appeared. This Creed doth not appear to be known till about the Eighth Century. It might perhaps be called the Athanasian Creed, because it is so agreeable to the Doctrine which *Athanasius* so strenuously maintained. However, we need not be very solicitous about the Author of this Creed; it is sufficient that what is contained in it, is not repugnant to Scripture, but agreeable to it. It has been received as a valuable Treasure for several hundred of Years, and is still religiously received by the Church of *England*; because it condemns several ancient Heresies, and contains sound and good Doctrine, true and orthodox Divinity. It is an excellent Epitome of the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. As this Creed is appointed by the Church of *England* to be read several Times in the Year, and as it opposes those Heresies which the Catholic Church condemned in the primitive Times, so it may not be improper to give an Account, and to shew what Heresies this Creed contradicts and condemns. This Creed asserts, that “there is one Person
 “ of the Father, another of the Son, and
 “ another of the Holy Ghost;” in Opposition to *Sabellius*, who maintained that the Word

or Son of God was not any real Being, different or distinct from the Person of the Father; but understood by the Word or Son of God some Attribute, Power, or Operation; and considered the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost only as three different Names and Virtues. *Sabellius* began to teach his Error or Heresy about the Middle of the Third Century, the Year of Christ 250.

The Creed affirms, that “ the Godhead of
 “ the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy
 “ Ghost is all one; the Glory equal, the
 “ Majesty co-eternal: Such as the Father is,
 “ such is the Son, and such is the Holy
 “ Ghost: The Father is God, the Son is
 “ God, and the Holy Ghost is God:” In
 Opposition to *Arius*, who divided the Substance, denying the Divinity of the Son of God; maintaining that the Word of God is a Creature, produced out of nothing, of a Substance different from the Father, and that he had a Beginning; that he is a precarious and dependent Being, depending as much upon the Will of the Father as any other Creature whatsoever, and consequently a Creature. *Arius* began to publish his Errors about the Year of Christ 318: And likewise in Opposition to *Macedonius*, who denied that the Holy Ghost is God. *Macedonius* lived in the Fourth Century about the Year of Christ 359; he was Bishop of *Constantinople*.

The

The Creed asserts, as to the Incarnation,
 “ that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of
 “ God, is God and Man ; God of the Sub-
 “ stance of the Father, begotten before the
 “ World;” in Opposition to the same *Arius*
 and to *Photinus*; the former of whom main-
 tained that the Son is of a Substance different
 from the Father ; and the latter maintained
 that the Word was not a distinct Person
 from the Father, and that the Designation
 of the Son of God ought not to be given him
 before his being born of the Virgin *Mary*.
 The Error of *Photinus* was condemned by the
 Bishops of the *East* in a Council held at *An-*
tioch in the Year of Christ 345, and by the
 Bishops of the *West* in the Council of *Milan*
 in the Year of Christ 346. “ And Man of
 “ the Substance of his Mother, born in the
 “ World ; perfect God, and perfect Man ;”
 in Opposition to *Apollinaris* and his Follow-
 ers ; who advanced that there was but one
 Nature in Jesus Christ, and that even the
 Flesh of Jesus Christ was of the same Nature
 with the Divinity. They likewise added that
 this Flesh partook not of the Womb of the
 Virgin *Mary*, but that it passed through there
 as through a Canal or Channel. *Apollinaris*
 lived in the Fourth Century.

The Creed adds “ of a reasonable Soul,”
 which the same *Apollinaris* denied ; main-
 taining that there was no intelligent Soul in
 Jesus Christ: “ And human Flesh subsisting;”

in Opposition to *Valentinus*, who maintained that the Son had no human Flesh, and that the Saviour or Christ passed through the Womb of the Virgin as through a Canal; like as *Apollinaris* asserted after him. *Valentinus* lived in the Second Century.

The Creed asserts, “who although he be
“ God and Man, yet he is not two, but one
“ Christ;” in Opposition to *Nestorius*, who held that there were two Persons in Christ; whereas there is only one Person by the Union of the Deity with the Humanity, whom we call Christ: He taught that he, who is Man, and had suffered in the Person of Jesus Christ, is a different Person from God. *Nestorius* lived in the Fifth Century, about the Year of Christ 430.

Lastly, the Creed adds, “One altogether;
“ not by Confusion of Substance, but by
“ Unity of Person;” in Opposition to *Eutychius* and his Followers, who confounded the two Natures of the Divinity and Humanity; they, carrying the Union of the two Natures in Christ Jesus too far, made but one of two Natures, and could not endure that two Natures should be owned after that Union. *Eutychius* lived in the Fifth Century, and was accused in a Council held in the Year of Christ 448. And in Opposition to the Monothelites, who maintained that there was but one Will in Christ Jesus, and therefore they were called Monothelites, from a Greek Derivation upon
this

this Account. “ One altogether ; not by
 “ Confusion of Substance, but by Unity of
 “ Person ; ” one by such a personal Unity,
 as we perceive in our own Nature : “ For as
 “ the reasonable Soul and Flesh is one Man,”
 as the rational Soul and human Body make
 one Man ; “ so God and Man is one Christ,”
 one Anointed, or one Messiah. The Churches
 of the *East* and *West* acknowledged that there
 were two Natures in Christ Jesus, but then
 they rightly maintained that they made only
 one Person. If we allow two Natures in Christ
 Jesus, the Divine and the Human, as the
 Scripture evidently sets before us, and each
 Nature to have its own Faculties, and each
 Faculty to have its different Operations ; it
 follows on Course that we must acknowledge
 that there are two Wills in Christ Jesus, the
 divine and the human Will, and that each
 Will hath its different Operations. The Mo-
 nothelites appeared in the Seventh Century,
 about the Year of Christ 620 ; and therefore
 several Years after the Time of *Athanasius*.

Having thus shewn what Errors this Creed
 opposes and condemns ; I come now to con-
 sider, as I proposed, the Reasons why some
 People are unwilling to repeat this Creed, or
 to give their Consent and Belief to it.

1st, Because in the supposed Attempt to
 explain the Doctrine of the Trinity, there
 seems to be Contradiction : I shall shew that
 there is no Contradiction in this Attempt.

The Creed sets forth that “ the Father is
 “ eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy
 “ Ghost eternal ; and yet they are not three,
 “ eternal, but one eternal ; ” with some
 other like Passages. That “ the Father is
 “ God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost
 “ is God ; and yet they are not three Gods,
 “ but one God. ” What this Creed asserts,
 the Scripture likewise asserts ; the Father is
 there stiled *God*, the Son *God*, and the Holy
 Ghost *God*, in the true and proper Sense of
 the Word *God** ; the most high God, the
 great

* Magistrates are called Gods in Scripture, *Psal.* lxxxii.
 6. *John* x. 34. not in the true and proper Sense of the
 Word ; but upon the Account of their Office, because
 they are commissioned by God and derive their Autho-
 rity from Him. *Adam* is called *the Son of God*, *Luke* iii.
 38. not in the true and proper Sense of the Word, but be-
 cause he was immediately created by God, and had neither
 natural Father or Mother. True Believers are called the
 Sons of God, and the Children of God ; *Rom.* viii. 14,
 16. not in the true and proper Sense of the Word, but
 by Adoption and Grace, because they are taken into
 God’s Family for the Sake of Christ Jesus, *For ye are all*
the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus, *Gal.* iii. 26.
 and because the Spirit witnesseth thereto : *Rom.* viii. 16.
 But Christ Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, the
 Son of God by Nature, by eternal Generation, and
 therefore God in the proper Sense of the Word : *Unto the*
Son He saith, that is, the Father, *Thy Throne, O God, is*
for ever and ever ; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter
of thy Kingdom. And Thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast
laid the Foundation of the Earth ; and the Heavens are the
Works of thine Hands. They shall perish, but Thou re-
mainest ; and they all shall wax old as doth a Garment ; and
 as

great Sovereign of the whole Universe ; and yet the same Scripture affirms that there is but one God. The Father is stiled God in Scripture ; *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not : 2 Cor. xi. 31. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort : 2 Cor. i. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ : Eph. i. 3. The Son is stiled God in Scripture ; In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God : All Things were made by him ; and without him was not any Thing made that was made : John i. 1, 3. Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever ; Amen. Rom. ix. 5. God was manifest in the Flesh : 1 Tim. iii. 16. Unto the Son he saith ; Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever : Heb. i. 8. In him, that is, Christ, dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily : Colos. ii. 9. He is stiled King of Kings, and Lord of Lords : Rev. xix. 16. The Holy*

as a Vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but Thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail : Heb. i. 8, 10, 11, 12. Can this be the Language to a Creature ? It is impossible. It is the proper Language to the Creator. Let therefore all those, who deny our blessed Saviour's Divinity, or deny Him to be God in the proper Sense of the Word, whether Arians or Socinians, stand amazed, and be surpris'd at their inconsistent Conduct,

Ghost is stiled *God* in Scripture; lying unto him is called lying unto God; *Acts* v. 3, 4. Why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? *Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God.* The holy Scripture, because it was dictated by the Holy Ghost, is said to be *given by Inspiration of God*: 2 *Tim.* iii. 16. compared with 2 *Pet.* i. 21. Because we are *the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, we are said to be the Temple of God, and *that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us*: 1 *Cor.* vi. 19. compared with 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. He is joined with the Father and the Son, both in the Form of Baptism, and in the Apostolical Benediction. Thus these three different or distinct Persons are stiled *God* in the Sacred Writings; and yet these Sacred Writings affirm that there is but one God: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*: Mark xii. 29. Thus St Paul tells the *Corinthians*, *There is none other God but one: To us there is but one God*: 1 *Cor.* viii. 4, 6. And in his Epistle to *Timothy* he asserts, *There is one God*: 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. And in the Text, *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.* Now though the Scriptures assert that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; and that there is but one God, consequently not three Gods; which Doctrine the Athanasian Creed likewise maintains; yet here is no Contradiction; because it is not affirmed that three Persons are

are .

are one Person; but that three Persons who are distinct, of very high Character, of immense Perfections, Incomprehensible, Eternal, and Almighty, are one God: They so partake of one and the same divine Nature, that they all together make but one God: The divine Essence is but One, though the Persons are Three and distinct; and therefore the three Persons may make or constitute one Deity or Godhead, without any Manner of Contradiction. God is three in Relations or Persons, and but one in Essence. But how or in what Manner three Persons, who are separately stiled *God* in Scripture in the true and proper Sense of the Word, are but one God, all Eternal, Omniscient, and Almighty, all willing and doing the same Things, we cannot comprehend nor explain, nor conceive by the Strength of human Reason; and therefore we must humbly submit to what God has been pleased to reveal to us, adore his great and glorious Majesty, and captivate our Reason to the Belief of unsearchable Truths.

2dly, Some People are unwilling to repeat the Athanasian Creed, because it so strictly requires Belief of it, and threatens Disbelief upon Pain of Damnation. This Objection I shall shew has no Weight in it.

If there is any Thing, contained in this Creed contrary to Scripture, it is not to be believed; but if what is contained in it, be agreeable

agreeable to Scripture, and may be proved thereby, it must be believed; and the Disbelief of it will incur no less a Penalty than Damnation. This Creed represents to us the Necessity of believing the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, in order to our Salvation and Happiness hereafter; and threatens those who destroy this Faith with very severe Penalty: “ Whosoever will be
 “ saved; before all Things it is necessary
 “ that he hold the Catholic Faith: Which
 “ Faith, except every one do keep whole and
 “ undefiled; without Doubt he shall perish
 “ everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is
 “ this, that we worship one God in Trinity,
 “ and Trinity in Unity; neither confound-
 “ ing the Persons, nor dividing the Sub-
 “ stance. Furthermore, it is necessary to
 “ everlasting Salvation; that he also believe
 “ rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus
 “ Christ.” What the Creed sets forth as necessary to Salvation, and threatens the Disbelief of with heavy Punishment; the same do the Sacred Writings: *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned: Mark xvi. 15, 16.* Salvation is here offered to every one that believeth the Gospel; and Damnation threatned to every one that believeth it not, with the Doctrines contained in it; especially the Doctrine of
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the Trinity; into the Belief of which every Person is baptized, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: And the Doctrine of the Incarnation, by Means of which our Redemption was brought about. To this Purpose it is expressed in another Place; *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him*: John iii. 36. So that Belief is requisite to Salvation, and Disbelief threatned with most dreadful Punishment. *There were false Prophets also*, says the Apostle, *among the People, even as there shall be false Teachers among you; who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction*: 2 Pet. ii. 1. We may therefore without Breach of Christian Charity, without any Uneasiness to our Minds, declare that those who do not believe the fundamental Articles of Christianity; but invalidate and destroy the Christian Faith, *which was once delivered unto the Saints, and which we should earnestly contend for*: Jude 3. we may, I say, declare that such People, in the Language of the Athanasian Creed, “shall perish everlastingly;” or shall incur the Penalty of Damnation; it is what the Scripture, as you have already heard, affirms and asserts. But then it must be understood, which I desire you to observe, that the Penalty here threatned relates only to those,
who

who have had sufficient Means of Conviction, of arriving at the Truth, to whom the Catholic Faith has been proposed and laid before them ; and yet have rejected it ; have evilly and obstinately opposed it, *holding the Truth in Unrighteousness*, as the Apostle expresses it, *Rom. i. 18.* choosing Error rather than sound Doctrine. This dreadful Penalty is not to be extended to those, that never heard of the Gospel of Christ, of the Christian Religion, of the Catholic Faith, *Mark xvi. 15. Rom. x. 14.* nor to those, that have not had sufficient Means of Conviction, nor Opportunity of embracing the Christian Faith : nor to those, that are not in a Capacity to know and believe the Truth ; such as Infants, Idiots, and Mad People ; because God will never require that of any Person, which he is not able to exercise and perform. *He is no austere Master, taking up that he laid not down, and reaping that he did not sow ; Luke xix. 21.* but a most merciful and gracious Being, making favourable Allowances in all Cases. Nor to those, that are not fully persuaded of every Passage of the Athanasian Creed ; for that Creed does not require Belief of every Passage of it upon Pain of Damnation : But what it requires as necessary to Salvation, is the Catholic Faith ; “ before all “ Things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ; ” the great Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation ; the Belief of which
the

the Scripture makes necessary to Salvation, being essential Parts of Christian Faith. But the Illustration or Method of proving the Doctrine of the Trinity, as it is set down or expressed in the Creed; the Creed does not require to be believed as necessary to Salvation: Because it passes off from the Illustration, and returns back to the Doctrine first proposed, the Catholic Faith: "So that in all Things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped: He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity;" he must believe that there are three Persons, yet but one God; for some Doctrines are to be believed as necessary to Salvation, as well as the Practice of those Things that are enjoined us; Belief is necessary as well as Practice; whatever some People may imagine. However, we must be sincere in what we do; for God, who knows our Hearts, knows upon what Principles we act, and will deal with us according to what we deserve. If we act out of a vain Disposition, out of Pride and Conceit, unwilling to go in the same Path that other People walk in; averse to believe as they do: Or out of unreasonable Prejudice to some particular Points, not concerning ourselves to enquire into the Truth; being indifferent about them, and not caring to give ourselves the Trouble to make an impartial Enquiry into them: Or out of a servile

vile Compliance to what some particular People do and practise, in order to ingratiate ourselves with them : If this is our Conduct concerning such vast and important Concerns ; we have not any Reason, even in our own unbiaſſed Opinion, to expect much Favour to be ſhewn us. But if we act out of an honeſt and good Heart, meaning well in what we do ; though we cannot remove all Difficulties, yet we are ſafe in what we do ; and ſhall no doubt find a gracious Acceptance at the Hand of God. *We ſhould earneſtly contend*, as the Scripture directs us, *for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints* ; Jude 3. for the great Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation ; becauſe upon theſe depend Affairs of the greateſt Importance to us. It is not a Matter of Indifference whether we believe them or not ; we are obliged to believe them upon the Account of our Salvation ; upon the Account of their Influence upon our Life and Converſation. If we ſeriouſly conſider, we ſhall find that theſe Doctrines have a great Tendency to promote a religious Converſation, to advance Piety and Goodneſs in the World, to ſuppreſs Vice and Wickedneſs, and to oblige Men to forſake their Sins. God the Father gave his only begotten Son to be our Saviour, to die for our Sins, to be made a Sacrifice for us, to redeem us from Death and Deſtruction, and to put us into a State of Life and

Happineſs ;

Happiness ; which is such a surprising Instance of divine Love, from such an immensely great and glorious Being ; that it must lay the greatest Obligations imaginable upon us to perform our Duty, to forsake Sin, to be religious, to walk and to please Almighty God : To raise our Thoughts to the most affectionate, to the most intense Love of his Divine Majesty ; to praise, adore, and magnify him : And therefore Glory, Honour, Power, and Thanksgiving be for ever ascribed to God the Father, for his inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ. The Son willingly came into the World ; condescended to take our Nature upon him, gave his Life a Ransom for Mankind, and actually died upon our Account : The Death of such a most excellent Person in order to work our Redemption, not of a mere Man, but of God blessed for ever ; must be a most powerful Motive to heighten our Love and Adoration for him, to increase our Affection to the greatest Degree, to do what he commands us : To have a most awful Reverence for every Part of Christian Duty ; to follow his Doctrine, to imitate his Example, to trust in his Mercy, and to depend upon Pardon and Forgiveness upon sincere Repentance : This must be a most engaging Motive to express our utmost Detestation of Vice, to induce us to forsake all Manner of Sin, and to improve in every
divine

divine Grace and Virtue. The Obligation laid upon us by such a most divine Person, who hath done such surprising Things for us, in order to promote our Salvation, to rescue us from the Slavery of Sin, Death, and the Devil, is infinitely greater than that of a mere Man or Creature: And therefore *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*; for the great Things he hath done for us, for the surprising Love he hath shewn to us: *Rev. v. 13. Unto Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the first-begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sin in his own Blood; and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father; to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen: Rev. i. 5, 6.* The Holy Ghost is continually doing good Offices for us; inspiring us with good Thoughts, kindling in us holy Desires, raising our Affections in Raptures of Praise; exciting us to Love and Obedience, to regard our Duty, to turn our Thoughts to the Concerns of another World, to the great Affairs of our everlasting Happiness: Assisting us with his Grace to resist Temptations, to work out our Salvation, to secure a State of Bliss and Glory hereafter. Besides, this blessed Spirit did greatly contribute to promote the important Affair of our Redemption, by descending
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upon our blessed Saviour, *lighting and remaining upon him*; Matt. iii. 16. John i. 33. qualifying him for the Administration of his mediatorial Office, pointing out that he was the Person set apart for this great Work: By bestowing upon the Apostles miraculous Gifts and Graces, enabling them to propagate the Gospel; by which happy Means it is come down to us of these Times, and we receive the unspeakable Benefit of the glorious Light of this divine Dispensation. This blessed Spirit being God lays greater Obligation upon us to love and adore him, to reverence and respect him, to be fearful to grieve and displease him by Sin and Disobedience, than if he was a mere Creature: And therefore unto this blessed Spirit be ascribed all Honour, Power, and Glory for ever and ever. Our Faith, Hope, Fear, and Love are more excited, more raised, more enlarged; and we are more powerfully engaged to obey the Gospel, through the Belief of the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, than we could possibly be without it; infinite Obligation is thereby laid upon us. In short, the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity have done surprising Things for Man's Redemption; to deliver him from Destruction, and to bring him to Happiness. Those, who do not believe the great Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, lose those inestimable Advantages above mentioned; but those,

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that believe these Doctrines, have the most powerful Motives to raise them to Life and Godliness; to Grace here, and Glory hereafter. We should therefore seriously consider with ourselves, what great Disadvantages we shall incur, by not embracing these most important Branches of Christian Faith. I shall conclude with the Collect for Trinity-Sunday :

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy Servants Grace, by the Confession of a true Faith, to acknowledge the Glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the Power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: We beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst keep us stedfast in this Faith, and evermore defend us from all Adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, World without End. *Amen.*



Faith alone not available to SALVATION,
but Faith and Good Works the sure Way
to HAPPINESS.

A DISCOURSE concerning the *Methodists*.

MATT. VII. 21.

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,
shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but
he that doth the Will of my Father who is in
Heaven.*

THESE Words are Part of that most
excellent Sermon, which our blessed
Saviour preached to the Multitudes upon the
Mountain. Having pronounced his Bless-
ings to the People, rectified the Mistakes
about the Law, expounded the spiritual Sense
and Meaning of it, and given a great deal of
religious and good Advice: And having like-
wise discoursed of Alms, Prayer, Forgiveness
of Injuries, Fasting, our true Treasure, God
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and Mammon : About Censuring and Judging of others, and about Reproof, exhorting his Hearers to several pious and religious Duties : Our blessed Saviour comes here, in the Words of the Text, to acquaint his Auditors ; that a bare Belief and Profession of his Religion, acknowledging him to be their Lord and Saviour, that Great Prophet that should come into the World, would not be sufficient to procure for them the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal Happiness. But if they were desirous of a State of Felicity in another World, if they would have a sure Foundation to build their Hope of Heaven and eternal Salvation upon ; they must perform sincere Obedience to the divine Commands, to the divine Will of Almighty God. Obedience therefore is the Life of Religion, and without it all other Pretensions will signify nothing ; neither the Favour of God in this Life, nor the Kingdom of Heaven hereafter, can in the ordinary Method of Duty be purchased without Obedience to the Laws of God. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; but he that doth the Will of my Father who is in Heaven.*

In discoursing further upon the Words of the Text, I shall (God willing) do these Things :

First,

First, I shall shew what is meant by saying, *Lord, Lord*.

Second, That this Belief or Profession is not sufficient to entitle Men to *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, to the Rewards of another Life after this.

Third, That Obedience to the divine Commands, a religious Conformity to the Will of God, a Life agreeable to the Laws of Heaven, are the only sure Means to procure for us a State of eternal Life and Happiness hereafter.

Fourth and lastly, I shall remove some Objections, and so conclude.

First, I shall shew what is meant by saying, *Lord, Lord*.

To call Christ *Lord*, is to acknowledge him to be the Saviour of Mankind, the Son of the living God, the blessed Messiah, that great Prophet that was to come into the World: It is to acknowledge him to be our Lord and Master, the Head and Governor of the Church: It is to profess him to be God-Man; perfect God, and perfect Man; *the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*; Heb. i. 3. as well as *the Seed of David according to the Flesh*: Rom. i. 3. To call Christ *Lord*, is to believe in him, and to rely upon him for Salvation; to believe that he came down from Heaven, took our

Nature upon him, died for Mankind; in order to satisfy God's Justice, to reconcile him to us, to procure our Pardon, to wash us from our Sins in his Blood, and to put us into a State of Salvation. In short, to call *Christ Lord*, is to believe the whole Oeconomy of our Redemption, to rely upon the Worthiness of his Death and Merits for us; to believe that *He of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption*: 1 Cor. i. 30.

Having thus shewn what is meant by calling *Christ Lord*; I come now to shew,

Second, That this Belief or Profession is not sufficient to Men to *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, to the Rewards of another Life after this.

Though it is necessary to call *Christ Lord*, to acknowledge him to be the Saviour of the World, to profess, believe in him, and to rely upon his Merits for Salvation; yet this Belief or Profession alone will not be sufficient, it will not answer the great Purposes of Religion, nor procure a State of eternal Happiness for us. Practice is required as well as Belief; they must not be separated; and therefore Faith alone will never carry Men to Heaven and eternal Life. If we expect to be happy hereafter, we must do our Duty in this Life. We must perform the divine Will of Almighty God, and practise good Works

Works in Obedience to his Commands, in order to evidence the Sincerity of our Faith, to give us a Title to, and to qualify us *to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. Not every one that saith unto me, *Lord, Lord*, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father who is in Heaven. Men may call upon our blessed Saviour, and say *Lord, Lord*; they may acknowledge his surpassing Worth and Merits for their Salvation, and entirely rely upon the Satisfaction which he hath made to God for the Sins of Mankind: They may take upon them to be the Favourites of Heaven; the only Servants, Sons, and Saints of God, and confidently call upon him*: They may, in the Language of the People called *Methodists*, say, That they are looked upon as righteous in God's Sight, and justified freely through Faith in Christ Jesus, without any Regard to any Work: They may strenuously assert that the Righteousness of Christ Jesus is an everlasting, as well as a perfect Righteousness: They may call the Blood of Jesus the blessed *Bethesda*, the true *Jordan*; they may trust in the Righteousness of Christ, confide in the Worthiness of his Merits, and expect to be washed from their Sins in his Blood; without any Regard to any Work or Fitness in them, for they are not under the Law, but under

* *Whitefield's Sermon, What think ye of Christ*, p. 11, 12, 13. *Cennick's Sermon, Naaman Cleansed*, p. 14.

Grace : They may in this View desire, and expect, and trust to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven ; but without good Works, without Charity, without *Faith that worketh by Love*, as the Apostle speaks, *Gal. v. 6.* they will with all their Faith and Confidence be denied Admittance, without a religious and good Life, without a Christian Conversation, without Sincerity and Uprightness, without a right Performance of the Will of God, they will be repulsed with this terrible Sentence ; *I never knew you ; depart from me, ye that work Iniquity : Matt. vii. 23.* The Devils acknowledge that *Christ is the Son of God*, *Luke iv. 41.* and believe that he is the Saviour of Mankind ; but this Belief and Acknowledgement will be of no Benefit to them, nor will they thereby receive any Advantage to themselves. Christ *took not on him the Nature of Angels ; but he took on him the Seed of Abraham ;* as the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* acquaints us : *Heb. ii. 16.* The Meaning of which is, that Christ Jesus is not the Saviour of fallen Angels but of fallen Man. No Doubt the fallen Angels are well acquainted with this important Affair, and fully know that Christ is not a Saviour to them, but will appear as a Judge to take Vengeance upon them, and punish them for their Sin and Disobedience against God. And therefore when the *Two possessed with Devils* met our blessed Saviour, the Devils *cried out,*

out, saying, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? Art thou come to torment us before the Time?* Matt. viii. 28, 29. And therefore though the Devils own Christ to be Lord, and acknowledge him to be the Son of God; yet this Acknowledgement will be of no Benefit and Service to them. Faith therefore alone will never carry Men to Heaven and Happiness; there must be a virtuous Behaviour and good Conduct joined with it to gain this most glorious Prize: If we expect to enjoy the blessed Presence of Almighty God, we must *follow Peace with Men and Holiness with the Lord:* Heb. xii. 14. Let us take this Affair into further Consideration. Our blessed Saviour himself tells us in the Verses following the Text; *Many, says he, will say to me in that Day, [at the great Day of Judgment;] Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name? And in thy Name have cast out Devils? And in thy Name done many wonderful Works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work Iniquity:* Matt. vii. 22, 23. In the Case before us there must have been great Faith, great Trust and Confidence in Christ, to be enabled to perform such extraordinary Things, such wonderful and miraculous Works; *For there is no Man,* says our Saviour in another Place, *who shall do a Miracle in my Name, that can lightly speak Evil of me:* Mark ix. 39. Implying, that whoever works a Miracle in Christ's Name, must
not

not only think well of our blessed Saviour, but must have some great Degree of Faith and Belief in him. But as the Conduct of such People was not agreeable to their Faith, as they did not perform the Will of God, nor were obedient to his divine Commands; they are rejected as Workers of Iniquity. Though they had such Faith in Christ as in his Name to cast out Devils; yet without a virtuous Conversation they would be thrown to evil Spirits themselves, and be *cast as unprofitable Servants into outer Darknes; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*: Matt. xxv. 30. So that Faith alone is not sufficient to the Purpose, nor can be depended upon as a proper Evidence of the Favour of God, or of a blessed and happy State to come. St Paul thus writes to the *Corinthians*; *Though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing*: 1 Cor. xiii. 2. The Apostle had given an Account of the Usefulness and Excellency of Gifts, he here sets forth the superior Excellency of Graces; acquainting the *Corinthians*, that without the Grace of Charity, without the sincere Love of God and Man, all the Faith in the World, the greatest that can be, will signify nothing; nor will be of any Advantage in the great Affairs of Religion, in the most important Concerns of the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal Life. To the same Purpose St James writes: *What doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man*

a Man say he hath Faith, and hath not Works? Can Faith save him? And again; Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead being alone: But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead? James ii. 14, 17, 20. The Apostle in these Words shews the Vanity of a fruitless Faith, of a Faith without good Works; without Holiness and Obedience, without Justice and Righteousness, without Mercy and Charity; and that such a Faith as this will never be available to Salvation. At last he sums up the Account, and very strongly concludes, against which can lie no Exception, that as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also: ver. 26. What I have now said, I think, is sufficient to convince every reasonable Person, that Faith alone is not sufficient to entitle Men to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, to the Rewards of another Life after this.

It is true indeed that great Promises are made to Faith, and glorious Things are spoken of it; but yet there must be good Works, evangelical Performances added to Faith, to entitle us to a State of Salvation: Without these necessary Conditions, the highest Acts of Faith will signify nothing. The *Methodists* lay too great Stress upon Faith, and not a proper Stress upon good Works; their Preaching being chiefly about Faith alone, and the Excellency of it*. It has

* *Whitefield's Serm. What think ye, &c. p. 11.*

been

been observed, that there have been People in all Ages, who have exalted the Virtue of Faith to the Neglect of good Works, and the Prejudice of a good Life; as if a mere speculative Belief was sufficient to Salvation, and a bare Profession of Christianity would give a Discharge from the Practice of moral Duties; which the Gospel strictly enjoins, and without which Men will perish with all their Faith. “Many, says one of the *Methodists*, I fear, think to be justified or “looked upon as righteous in God’s Sight, “without Jesus Christ.” I do not know one truly Christian Person, that expects to be justified in the Sight of God without an Interest in the Merits of our blessed Redeemer. If this Writer means by the Word Many, Arians and Socinians, who deny our blessed Saviour’s Divinity, or Deists, who deny revealed Religion; that is nothing to the Church of *England*, which renounces all such false and erroneous Tenets as they maintain. The Church of *England* renders unto Faith, the Things that are Faith’s; and unto Works, the Things that are Work’s. We readily acknowledge that we cannot be saved without an Interest in the Merits of the Son of God, the blessed Redeemer of Mankind; that Faith in Christ Jesus is necessary to Salvation, that the Guilt and Stains of our Souls must be washed away by his most precious Blood, that they must be cleansed from the Filth of Sin

Sin and Corruption by his Sacrifice for us, and that his Merits must be applied to the Imperfection of human Nature, to make our imperfect Services acceptable to Almighty God: But then we earnestly contend, according to the Truth of Scripture, that Christ Jesus will save none without Obedience to his divine Commands; for the Scripture expressly asserts, that *He became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him: Heb. v. 9.* But if we do not obey him, he will not become the Author of Salvation to us. We readily acknowledge *that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15.* that by his Sufferings and Death he hath put all Mankind into a State of Salvation; but then we insist upon this great Truth, that he requires of us Obedience to his Gospel, the Practice of good Works, to entitle us to that Salvation which he hath purchased for us. And therefore we preach to the People and to ourselves, as the Scripture directs us; *Giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity.* For if these Things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: But he that lacketh these Things is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged

purged from his old Sins : 2 Pet. i. 5—9. We press upon Christian People to cleanse themselves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God ; 2 Cor. vii. 1. To work out their own Salvation with Fear and Trembling ; Phil. ii. 12. To follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord : Heb. xii. 14. and to give Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure : 2 Pet. i. 10. For if our Conversation be not as it becometh the Gospel of Christ ; the highest Instances of Faith can never save us ; but if it be agreeable to his Gospel, we shall certainly be saved : For so an Entrance shall be ministred unto us abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : 2 Pet. i. 11. The great Stress therefore, in running our Christian Race, should be laid upon the Practice of good Works ; because without religious and good Works, without evangelical Obedience, the greatest Faith cannot save us. Besides, the Practice of good Works implies Faith, a firm and true Belief in God and in Christ Jesus, the best Faith, the only true and saving Faith ; that Faith, which will be of real Benefit and Advantage to us : This is shewing our Faith by our Works, as St James speaks, convincing Mankind that our Faith is real and sincere, by the Fruits and Effects of it. Whereas Faith does not imply good Works, it may be fruitless and without any good Effects ; for a Man
may

may have Faith, and yet not be a good Christian, but a very vicious and bad Man : *You see then how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only* : James ii. 24. One of the *Methodists* * acquaints us, " That others there are, that think that Jesus Christ is to be applied to their Hearts, and that they can be justified in God's Sight only in and through him; this he says is to make him only in Part a Saviour. They are for doing what they can themselves, and then Jesus Christ is to make up the Deficiencies of their Righteousness." This, he says, is the Sum and Substance of our modern Divinity; and I am glad that he acknowledges it, for it is sound and good Divinity; though he does not seem to know it, and would have the People to entertain quite different Thoughts concerning Justification by Jesus Christ. In order to obtain Salvation we must work, labour, and strive in our Christian Calling; *we must, according to the Gospel of Christ Jesus, give Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure*; 2 Pet. i. 10. We must do what we can ourselves to accomplish this most important Affair, in order to answer the religious Demands of the Gospel. But when we have done all that we can, I must acknowledge that our Service will be imperfect, and our Righteousness defective. But as Christ Jesus died to save Mankind; as by his Death he was made

* *Whitefield's Sermon, What think ye of Christ*, p. 11.

a Sacri-

a Sacrifice for Sin; whereby he fully satisfied the Justice of God, appeased his Anger, reconciled him to Man, and procured his Pardon: And as Christ Jesus hath performed in our Nature perfect, complete, and sinless Obedience to all God's Commands; who hath *fulfilled all Righteousness*, Matt. iii. 15. *and who did no Sin*, 1 Pet. ii. 22. So for his Sake, for the Worthiness of his sufferings and Death, and the Merit of his Obedience, we are esteemed righteous in the Sight of God; and are reckoned as just, as if we had performed perfect Obedience to the divine Commands ourselves. Upon the Account of Christ Jesus, for the infinite Worthiness of his Merits in the great Affair of Man's Salvation, not only our many and great Sins, upon sincere Repentance, will be pardoned and forgiven; but our sincere but imperfect Obedience, upon using our best Endeavours to perform our Duty, doing what we can ourselves, will be graciously accepted as perfect. The Righteousness therefore of Christ Jesus is to be imputed to us; in the Language of Scripture we are to be *made the Righteousness of God in him*; 2 Cor. v. 21. or in other Words, the Righteousness of Christ Jesus is to make up the Deficiencies of our imperfect Righteousness, after we have done what we can ourselves. This is sound and good Doctrine, agreeable to Scripture, let who will have the Assurance to contradict it.

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This important Affair St *Paul* acquaints us with to our great Comfort; *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption: 1 Cor. i. 30.* If the Righteousness of Christ is not to be imputed unto us upon the sincere Performance of our Duty, upon Faith and Gospel-Obedience; or if his Righteousness is not to make up the Deficiencies of our Righteousness before a most righteous and holy God, we shall be in a most miserable and unhappy Situation: We have nothing to recommend us to the divine Favour. But blessed be God this is not our desperate Case; we have Hope of Salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, for what he hath done and suffered for Mankind. We have just Reason to expect the Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins, and God's Acceptance of our sincere but imperfect Services for the Sake of Christ Jesus, upon the Conditions of the Gospel; upon Faith, Repentance, Obedience, and a good Life. Though indeed we cannot expect to be justified by our own Righteousness, but by the Righteousness of Christ Jesus; yet we must have a personal Righteousness of our own to answer the Demands of the Gospel; for Christ Jesus will be a Saviour to none but to those who obey the divine Commands: *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he*

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that doth the Will of my Father who is in Heaven. Another of the People called *Methodists* would have Men reckon themselves upon a Level with the worst of Sinners, with Murderers, Thieves, and Publicans; in order to see their Nature, and the Want of a Redeemer*. Surely Men may sufficiently know the Want of a Saviour, and not look upon themselves as guilty of the worst of Crimes; Crimes, which they never committed, which are odious to God, which he has solemnly forbidden, which are inconsistent with their Christian Profession, and which when committed require a very severe and bitter Repentance. This is like sinning *that Grace may abound*; which the Apostle averts with *God forbid*: Rom. vi. 1, 2. Every Person that consults his own Breast, that considers the Corruption and Depravity of human Nature, the many Failings and Imperfections of it, with its frequent Relapses into Sin; that considers the pure and holy Nature of God, *who cannot behold Filthiness and Iniquity*: Habak. i. 13. Every Person, that seriously considers these Things, must be abundantly convinced of the Want of a Saviour, of the Necessity of some divine Person to appear in his Behalf; to cleanse his Nature, to procure his Pardon, and to make his imperfect Services acceptable to Almighty God; without the disagreeable Addition of making himself worse

* *Cennick's Sermon, Naaman Cleansed, p. 12.*

than he is. We are all bad enough, there is no Occasion to increase the Guilt and Burden of our Crimes. I have mentioned this Passage to you, to shew you the Inconsistency and Unreasonableness of such Discourse as this, and how contrary it is to sound and good Doctrine; I come now to shew,

Third, That Obedience to the divine Commands, a religious Conformity to the Will of God, a Life agreeable to the Laws of Heaven, are the only sure Means to procure for us a State of eternal Life and Happiness hereafter.

I have already acknowledged the Necessity of Faith, that we must believe in Christ Jesus, and rely upon his Merits for Salvation; but I have shewn that this alone is not sufficient to the Purpose, and will never carry Men to Heaven and eternal Life. Faith is the Foundation, that must first be laid; but then to complete this spiritual Building, there must be the Practice of good Works to be placed and superstructed upon it. And here indeed the great Stress seems to be laid. The Text with several other Places of Scripture are entirely in Favour of this Opinion, and confirm this most important Point. *If you know these Things, says our blessed Saviour, happy are ye if ye do them: John xiii. 17.* The Happiness here proposed depends chiefly and in the greatest Measure upon Practice and

Performance, upon Obedience to the Will of God. *I am the true Vine*, says our blessed Saviour, *and my Father is the Husbandman. Every Branch in me that beareth not Fruit, he taketh away; and every Branch that beareth Fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more Fruit: John xv. 1, 2. This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly; that they, who have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works; these Things are good and profitable unto Men: Tit. iii. 8. Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come: 1 Tim. iv. 8. Christ became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him: Heb. v. 9. Our Saviour Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works: Tit. ii. 13, 14. We are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: Eph. ii. 10. Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord: Heb. xii. 14.* This Passage of Scripture excludes all manner of Hope of Salvation, without Holiness of Life and Conversation, without a religious, peaceable, and good Conduct.

These Texts of Scripture, with several others to the same Purpose, sufficiently convince us that Obedience to God's Commands, the Practice of good Works, and a religious Life

Life and Conversation, are the only sure Means to procure for us a State of eternal Life and Happiness hereafter; and that no other Means whatsoever, not even the greatest Acts of Faith without good Works, will be sufficient to the Purpose. Let those *Methodists* therefore, that lay such great Stress upon Faith, who say believe and be saved *, and so little upon good Works and a religious Life, read these Texts of Scripture and tremble; let them reflect upon their Unfaithfulness and Dishonesty, and their deceiving of the People. *Every Tree, that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire: Matt. vii. 19.* Though good Works I readily acknowledge cannot of themselves merit Salvation, nor deserve to be rewarded; because when we shall have done all those Things which are commanded us, we must say in the Language of Scripture; *We are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was our Duty to do: Luke xvii. 10.* Yet good Works, Obedience to the Will of God, are required by the Gospel of Christ Jesus, who has purchased our Redemption, who is entirely acquainted with the State and Condition of another Life; they are necessary Conditions of our Happiness, and without which in the ordinary Method of Salvation we cannot be happy. Christ indeed has fulfilled the Righteousness of the Law for Mankind, but the Righteousness of

* *Cennick's Sermon, Naaman Cleansed, p. 11.*

the Gospel we must perform ourselves: Christ Jesus has satisfied the Demands of the Law for Mankind, but he will never perform the Conditions of the Gospel upon our Account and in our Stead, but expects that we be obedient to his divine Commands. And therefore we must believe, repent, pray, and obey for ourselves; or else Christ's Sufferings, Death, and Obedience will be of no Benefit to us. No Person can safely rely upon the Merits of Christ Jesus, but he who sincerely conducts his Life according to the divine Will and Pleasure of Almighty God. Our Saviour seems to find Fault with his Disciples for believing in him, and making Profession of his Religion; and yet at the same Time not performing Obedience to his divine Commands: *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, says he, and do not the Things which I say?* Luke vi. 46. *That Servant, who knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes:* Luke xii. 47. If therefore we expect to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, to be made Partakers of the Happiness of a future State; we must not only believe Christ Jesus to be the Saviour of the World, but we must be obedient to his divine Commands; all the Faith in the World will signify nothing without Obedience and a good Life, without a religious Conformity to the divine Will of Almighty God. *Not every one that saith unto me,*
Lord,

Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; but he that doth the Will of my Father who is in Heaven.

The *Methodists* seem to make light of some of the most important Duties of Religion * ; as going constantly to Church, receiving the blessed Sacrament, believing the Scriptures, Prayer every Morning and Evening, and doing all the Good we can. A Man, that neglects these Duties, let him rely never so much upon the Merits of our Saviour, and let him never so earnestly desire to be washed from his Sins in his Blood, cannot be called a good Christian, nor has any Reason to expect the Happiness of a future Life. Whoever neglects public and private Prayer, the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, and doing Good to Mankind, when it is in his Power, such a Person behaves more like a savage Heathen than a Christian, and lives in a manifest Violation of his Duty. He, that disobeys the positive Commands of God, cannot be either a good Christian or a good moral Man ; because Disobedience to the positive Commands of God is itself Immorality and Wickedness, and has the very Nature of Sin ; *for Sin, as St John informs us, is the Transgression of the Law : 1 John iii. 4.* The disobeying of the Commands of God is the Crime, that is the Sin. Whoever lives without Prayer, and the Use of the Means of Religion, lives *without*

* *Cennick's Sermon, Naaman Cleansed, p. 11.*

God in the World; Eph. ii. 12. *may, is dead while he liveth*: 1 Tim. v. 6. He may indeed live a natural Life, but he cannot by any Means be said to live a spiritual Life; because he has not a due Sense of God and Religion upon his Mind. The public Worship and Service of God, private Prayer Morning and Evening, the receiving of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the devout reading of the Holy Scriptures, are the very Life of Religion. They are the happy Instruments under divine Providence of keeping up the true Spirit of Religion in the World, of inspiring Mens Minds with pious and good Sentiments, and of engaging them to regard the great Concerns of another Life. But without the Performance of these necessary Duties, not only all other Pretensions will signify nothing; for he, that will not take Pains to serve God, can have little or no Religion in him, he can never be a good Man; but we may in a short Time bid a Farewel to all manner of Virtue, Piety, and Religion. We may give Adieu to all manner of Honesty, Compassion, Civility, and good Manners; and we shall soon hear of nothing among us, but Anarchy, Confusion, and every evil Work. Whatever the *Methodists* may think of these Duties, the Scripture lays Stress upon them. *Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary; I am the Lord*: Levit. xix. 30. *Where two or three are gathered*

gathered together in my Name, says our blessed Saviour, there am I in the midst of them: Matt. xviii. 20. And they were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God: Luke xxiv. 53. It is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praises unto thy Name, O most High: To shew forth thy loving Kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night: Psal. xcii. 1, 2. Men ought always to pray, and not to faint: Luke xviii. 1. Pray without ceasing: 1 Thes. v. 17.— This do in Remembrance of me: — This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of me: 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. The Law of thy Mouth is better unto me, than thousands of Gold and Silver: Psal. cxix. 72. Through thy Precepts I get Understanding; therefore I hate every false Way: ver. 104. See Psal. xix. Search the Scriptures, says our blessed Saviour, John v. 39. I do not say that the bare Performance of these Duties will entitle People to a State of future Happiness, but a sincere and conscientious Performance of them will go a great Way to further and promote their Salvation. Nay, without a religious Performance of these Duties I cannot reasonably imagine how Men can expect a State of future Blessedness. As they are not good Christians, religious and well-meaning People, obedient to the Will of God, they cannot have a well-grounded Hope of the Rewards of another Life; and therefore the vain Pretensions of such People must fall to the Ground, and their confident Presumption must

must be frustrated and disappointed. We must go back with the People called *Methodists* to the first Rudiments of Christian Doctrine; and instead of going on to Perfection, we must instruct them in the common and ordinary Duties of Religion. I come now,

Fourth and lastly, To remove some Objections, and so conclude.

Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved: Rom. x. 13. I have already proved, according to the Text, that to call Christ *Lord*, or only to profess Belief in him, is not sufficient to Salvation, will never carry Men to Heaven and eternal Happiness; but that to gain this most glorious Prize we must likewise be obedient to the Will of God, and practise good Works. But this Passage of Scripture seems to contradict what I have already proved, to overthrow the great Design of the Christian Religion, the Practice of good Works; for *Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*; Tit. ii. 13, 14. because it is here said, *Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved*: Rom. x. 13. These Words are taken by St Paul out of the Prophecy of the Prophet *Joel* ii. 32. and are accommodated by him to the Times of the Gospel, to which they have relation, and of which they are a Prophecy; acquainting the
Romans

Romans that whosoever should call upon the Name of the Lord by religious Prayer and Supplication, whosoever should believe in Christ Jesus, firmly adhere to him, and be obedient to the divine Commands, should escape the Danger, and be delivered from those terrible Calamities which should come upon the Jewish Nation for their Crucifixion of the Son of God; and that this should be a Token and Pledge to them of future Deliverance and eternal Salvation. Or these Words may be understood of Salvation in general, Salvation common both to Jew and Gentile; shewing that Christ Jesus is the Saviour of all Mankind, without making any Difference or Distinction between them; and not defining in particular the Benefits and Advantages of Faith, declaring that Men may be saved by Faith alone, or by calling on the Name of the Lord. That this is the Meaning of this Passage before us, the Verses immediately preceeding it seem to point out. For the Scripture saith, says the Apostle, *Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no Difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved: Rom. x. 11, 12, 13.* If this is the Meaning of these Words, then they do not invalidate the Truth of what I have said to shew the Insufficiency

sufficiency of Faith alone as available to Salvation and Happiness.

2dly, When the Keeper of the Prison fell down before Paul and Silas, and asked them, *What he must do to be saved?* The Answer which they returned was, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House:* Acts xvi. 25, &c. Here Salvation seems to be attributed to Faith alone, contrary to what I have proved in this Discourse. It must here be observed that this Jailor was not a Christian, he did not believe in Jesus Christ: But being terrified by an Earthquake, and under great Uneasiness and Disorder of Mind, he made Application to Paul and Silas, and desired to know what he must do to obtain Salvation. They, according to their Preaching, directed him to believe on Jesus Christ, and he should obtain that Salvation which he desired. This Jailor, being a Heathen, was on Course to be instructed to believe in Christ Jesus, in order to entitle him to Salvation; for without Belief in Christ no Man can be saved: *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved:* Acts iv. 12. Faith is the Foundation, that must first be laid in the spiritual Building of the Christian Church; but when People are admitted into the Christian Religion, by Faith, they must then go on to Perfection, and
practise

practise all those Things that are commanded us of God. And therefore when *Paul* and *Silas* directed the Jailor to believe in Christ Jesus; they did not bid him rely upon Faith alone, and exclude good Works: But they directed him to believe in Christ Jesus, as the Saviour of the World; to receive and embrace his Doctrine, every Thing, every Duty that Christ commands in his Gospel, and to conform his Life according to the Will of God revealed in it. This is the true Christian Faith that is necessary to Salvation, and without which in the ordinary Method of the Christian Religion we cannot be saved. I do not know one Passage of Scripture that, in the great Concern of our Salvation, excludes evangelical and good Works.

3^{dly}, It is said, that we are justified freely through Faith in Jesus Christ, without any Regard to any Work or Fitness foreseen in us at all; for Salvation is the free Gift of God.

I do not know that any Person, who professes the Christian Religion, makes any Doubt about these Assertions, but readily assents to them, as they ought to be understood. But what is this to the Purpose? Will this prove that we are saved or justified without evangelical and good Works? If not, what is all this Stir, and Pomp, and Show made for? What are these Words put here for, without any Meaning? We readily
acknowledge

acknowledge that Salvation is the free Gift of God, that we had neither Hand nor Work in this most surprizing Affair. There was nothing in us to induce Almighty God to shew such wonderful Love and Compassion to Mankind: It was owing to himself, to his unbounded Goodness and Mercy towards us; what we did not deserve, and what we could not have expected: This is the Account which the Scripture gives of this most important Matter; of this amazing Love of God, that passeth Understanding; *by Grace are ye saved, through Faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God: Not of Works, lest any Man should boast:* Eph. ii. 8, 9. Almighty God freely gave his own Son for the Salvation of Mankind, to redeem them from Death and Destruction, without any Merit or Desert in us, without any Fitness in us to induce him to grant such an amazing Act of his Favour and Love; and required Faith in Christ Jesus in order to qualify Men for that Salvation which he had purchased for them. If this is the Meaning of being justified by Faith only, as the Eleventh Article of our Church sets forth, and which is the true Meaning of it, we readily subscribe to it. We firmly believe that Christ Jesus is the Saviour of the World; *the Way, and the Truth, and the Life:* John xiv. 6. the only Way to Heaven and eternal Happiness. We firmly believe that without Christ Jesus no Man can
be

be saved ; that without his Sufferings and Death, without an Interest in the Merits of his Worthiness and Satisfaction for Mankind, we cannot be reconciled to God, obtain the Pardon of our Sins, be justified hereafter, nor have any Hope of the Rewards of a future State. We firmly believe that *there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved*: Acts iv. 12. “ This “ is the true Catholic Faith, which except “ every one doth sincerely believe, we confess without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.” If this is the Case, what is the Reason that the *Methodists* separate from us? We hold the same Tenets, as to this Point, with themselves ; and preach the same Doctrine, which they so earnestly contend for. What is the Reason that they leave the Church of *England* and go out into the *Highways and Hedges*, Luke xiv. 23. Streets and Commons, and build Tabernacles to preach, as they pretend, the Gospel in ? Is it upon the Account of the Purity of Religion, or for the Sake of preaching that Doctrine which they are not permitted to preach in other Places ? This cannot be the Reason ; this Plea is not true. It is I am afraid upon other Accounts ; upon the Account of temporal Advantage and worldly Gain, which they find to rise much to their Benefit, and upon the Account of making a Party to themselves. If these are their Views, as they seem really to be, it is the

the Duty of every Person, especially of the Clergy, to undeceive the People, to tell them of their Doings,, and to persuade them to come out from among them; because their Design is to make a Prey of them.

But what follows ought to be taken Notice of as a Matter of much greater ill Consequence; it is what will affect their Salvation, their State hereafter. If the People called *Methodists* lay such great Stress upon Faith, and so much magnify it, as seem to lessen the Doctrine of good Works, and to make Men have a light Esteem of them, scarce thinking them worthy of their Observation: These are the ready Means to make People neglect their Duty, the more weighty Matters of the Gospel; which erroneous Method is doing the greatest Injury to the Souls of Men, and exposing them to the greatest Danger imaginable: *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord: Heb. xii. 14.* The *Methodists* ought as earnestly to contend for the Practice of good Works, as for Faith; they are both necessary to Salvation, and without them no Man can be saved. Faith alone will not do, *but Faith which worketh by Love*, as the Apostle speaks; *Gal. v. 6.* such a Faith, as is accompanied with a sincere Love of God and Man, with evangelical and good Works, doing all the Good we can. I readily acknowledge that St Paul says; *We conclude, that a Man is justified by Faith*

Faith without the Deeds of the Law: Rom. iii. 28. By the Deeds of the Law St Paul means the Jewish Law, and by being justified by Faith he means Justification by the Gospel, in Opposition to the Deeds of the Jewish Law; by which no Man *can be justified in the Sight of God*: ver. 20. In our Justification St Paul excludes Jewish, not good Works; ceremonial, not evangelical Obedience; which Obedience he insists upon *in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these Things*: 2 Pet. iii. 16. We are told that we are not under the Law, but under Grace*; by which Expressions it is intimated, that we should not regard Works so much as Faith. As we are not under the Law, we are freed from the Ceremonies of the Law. But as we are under Grace, the gracious Dispensation of the Gospel; we must not only believe in Christ Jesus for Salvation, but we must *add to our Faith, Virtue*: 2 Pet. i. 5. *We must grow in Grace*, 2 Pet. iii. 18. make Improvement in our Christian Conversation, practise good Works, and be careful to maintain a religious Conformity to the divine Will of Almighty God. And though “Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, as the Thirteenth Article of our Church expresses this Matter, are not pleasing to God, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Christ Jesus, &c.” Yet good

* *Whitefield's Sermon. What think ye of Christ?* p. 12.

Works done through Faith in Christ, in Obedience to his Commands, such good Works as his Gospel requires, will always be pleasing to God, and find a gracious Acceptance with him. This is what the Twelfth Article of our Church asserts, agreeable to the Scripture : “ Albeit that good Works, which are the Fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the Severity of God’s Judgment ; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith, insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known, as a Tree discerned by the Fruit.” That Christian Person, that takes Care to excel in the Virtues and Obedience of the Gospel, will always find Favour from Almighty God : But that Person, who believes and professes the Christian Religion, but takes no Care to live agreeable to it, nor to obey the Commands of God, let his Faith be never so great, will never be favourably received by him. We are told about the great Mystery of the New Birth, and of Christ being formed within us. These are Points which the *Methodists* make a great Noise about, but do not seem to understand them. The New Birth, in relation to Jews and Gentiles, is their leaving off their former Way of Worship, the believing in Christ Jesus, their Admission into his Religion by Baptism, and embracing of his Gospel.

pel. To this Purpose our blessed Saviour told *Nicodemus* ; *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God* : John. iii. 3. By these Words our Saviour gave *Nicodemus* to understand, that his acknowledging of him to be a Teacher come from God, would not be sufficient to entitle him to the Happiness of his Kingdom ; he must forsake his former Jewish Course, become a Profelyte to his Religion, and be a Christian by a new Birth in Baptism. That this is our Saviour's Meaning the fifth Verse fully determines ; *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man, or any one, be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*. Except a Person be admitted into the Christian Church by Baptism, or outward washing of Water ; and be born of the Spirit, and enter upon a new spiritual Course of Life agreeable to the Christian Way of Worship, in Opposition to the outward Ceremonies of the Law ; *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God* : He cannot be a true Christian here, nor expect Happiness hereafter. It is as necessary to be baptized with Water in this Place, as to be born of the Spirit ; to be born of Water is the same Thing as to be baptized with Water. This is very plain from the Practice of the Jews in admitting Profelytes to their Religion ; those, who had gone through the Ceremonies of Profelytism, were looked upon by the Jews as new-born Infants.

Now Water-Baptism, or outward washing with Water, being one of those Ceremonies, as Circumcision and the Offering of Sacrifice were the others, therefore to be born of Water must signify to be baptized with Water; as to be born of Circumcision must signify to be circumcised. Upon the Account of the Doctrine of Profelytism our blessed Saviour very justly blamed *Nicodemus's* Ignorance of the New Birth, or of being born again; *Art thou a Master of Israel, says he, and knowest not these Things?* John iii. 10. The *Methodists* seem to be as ignorant of the Nature of the New Birth, as *Nicodemus* was, though they pretend to be the true Instructors of Mankind. It is upon the Account of the New Birth, of Mens Admission into the Christian Religion, that *St Paul* thus addresses himself to the *Corinthians*; *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature; old Things are passed away, behold, all Things are become new:* 2 Cor. v. 17. When a Man becomes a Christian, *he is a new Creature*; he is obliged by his Profession to renounce his former old Course of Life, and enter upon a new Course of Behaviour. Old Customs and Ceremonies, whether Jewish or Heathen, must be forsaken; *old Things are passed away, behold, all Things are become new*; under the Gospel of Christ Jesus there is an entire Change and Alteration; a new Religion, a new State of Things, a new Life and Conversation. *In Christ Jesus, says St Paul,*

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neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a new Creature: Gal. vi. 15. Neither Jew nor Gentile can do any Thing available to procure the Favour of God, and to find Acceptance with him; it is the new Creature, the new Man, the Christian Man, that is in the right Way to Salvation. *Lie not one to another, says the Apostle, seeing that ye have put off the old Man with his Deeds; and have put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all: Colos. iii. 9, 10, 11.* There is no Religion under Heaven that can procure Salvation for Mankind, but the Christian; and in order to obtain Salvation, Mankind must be admitted into this Religion by Baptism, they must become new Creatures, be Profelytes to Christ, and live agreeable to his holy Gospel. Whenever therefore People are born again or regenerated, whenever they are admitted into the Christian Religion by Baptism; they must then change their Behaviour and Conduct. They must lead a new and spiritual Life, agreeable to their Christian Profession, in Virtue and Holiness of Behaviour. They must keep up Purity of Heart, cultivate a divine Frame and Temper of Mind, promote the Christian Conversation, live in the Fear of God, and take Care to keep his

Commandments according to the Gospel. *Circumcision is nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God: 1 Cor. vii. 19.*

Thus far concerning the New Birth; let us consider the other Point, of Christ being formed within us. These Words do not occur but in one Place that I know of in Scripture; and that is in the Epistle of St Paul to the *Galatians*: But they are nothing to the Purpose, for which the *Methodists* make use of them. St Paul thus addresses himself to the *Galatians*; *My little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again, until Christ be formed in you: Gal. iv. 19.* The *Galatians* were very likely converted to the Gospel by the Preaching of St Paul; Gal. iv. 13, 19. but in his Absence from them they were corrupted by false Apostles, and perverted from the Simplicity of the Gospel of Christ; they were led aside to Judaism, *ver. 21.* This Corruption of the Purity of the Christian Doctrine gave the Apostle great Uneasiness; he was in great Pain, like the Pain of a Woman in Travail, till Christ was formed in them; till they had renounced their Errors, and embraced the Gospel in Purity and Perfection. This is the true Meaning of Christ being formed within them. But what is this to the Purpose of the *Methodists*? I hope they are not afraid that the People should leave the Christian Religion, and go over to Judaism; if they

they are not afraid of this Apostasy and Revolt from Christianity, as I imagine they are not ; what is the Reason that they make use of the Apostle's Words to a Purpose, quite contrary to what he designed them, and perplex the People about them ? Such Perversion is not to be submitted to.

I have taken no Notice of the Journals, Sufferings, and History of the Lives of any of the *Methodists* ; they are too low to concern myself with them. But I earnestly entreat them not to let the Love of Gain so hinder the great Affairs of Religion, or to draw People into a wrong and erroneous Way of Thinking. The *Methodists* have made a great deal of Disturbance and Confusion in the Nation without any Reason, the Gospel of Christ Jesus being truly and regularly preached in the Church of *England*, and not " mere heathen Morality in most of our Churches," as One has the Assurance to affirm*. Surely he has either forgot or else did not know what St *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, which he quotes from the heathen Greek Poet *Menander*, that *evil Communications corrupt good Manners* : 1 Cor. xv. 33. Whoever preaches Morality or religious and good Behaviour, agreeable to the Gospel of Christ Jesus, preaches Christ Jesus ; let who will have the Confidence, the evil Communication, and the bad Speech, which is too apt to influence Men and to

* *Whitefield's Sermon, What think ye of Christ ?* p. 11.

corrupt their Morals, to call it mere heathen Morality : I am sensible that some of the *Methodists* make great worldly Advantage to themselves, in the disorderly and irregular Way they are now in ; but I would by all Means persuade them not to suffer any temporal Consideration to blind their Eyes, to pervert their Understanding, to lead the People aside from their Duty, or to make them run any Hazard in the most weighty and important Concerns of Salvation. Let them therefore return to the Church of *England*, from which they departed ; and, according to the good Advice of Almighty God by his Prophet, *Stand in the Ways and see, and ask for the old Paths, where is the good Way, and walk therein, and they shall find Rest for their Souls* ; Jer. vi. 16. and have a good Hope of a blessed State to come. To conclude :

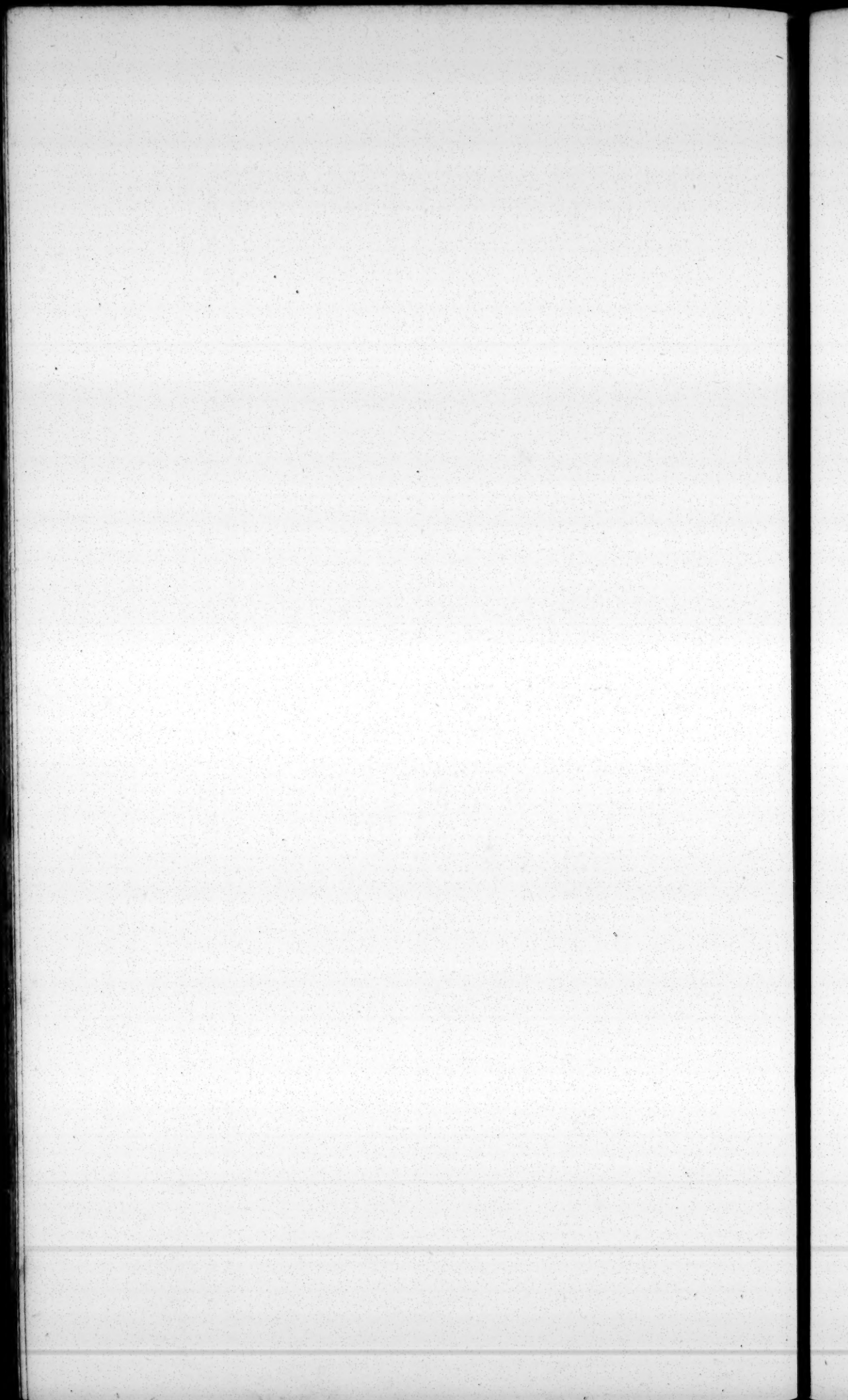
Unfruitfulness in good Works is dangerous to our Salvation ; and yet there are several People, who think themselves in a safe Condition, if they are not guilty of some grievous Vice and Impiety, of scandalous Crimes, though they do no Good, and take but little Care to excel in Holiness of Life and Conversation, in Christian Duty and Obedience. They take Pains to make People think well of them ; though upon an impartial Survey of their own Conduct, of their Life and Actions, they cannot reasonably think well of them-

themselves. As every Tree that bringeth forth evil Fruit, will certainly be cut down and destroyed by divine Justice; so *every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, will be hewn down and cast into the Fire*: Matt. vii. 19. It is as dangerous a Thing to omit our Duty, as to do Acts contrary to it; it is as dangerous a Thing to neglect what God commands, as to commit Sin which he forbids. It is a dangerous Thing to rely upon Faith, and at the same Time to neglect the Practice of good Works. I wish these Things were seriously considered by us all, and they would induce us to obey the divine Commands, which are so necessary to our Happiness.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three Persons but one God; unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*



Some



Some further OBSERVATIONS upon
the People called *METHODISTS*;

B E I N G

A SUPPLEMENT to the foregoing
D I S C O U R S E.

I DO not pretend to rank the *Methodists* among Atheists, Deists, Libertines, and Free-Thinkers; because the *Methodists* seem to have regard to Religion; they have a Form of Godliness, but not the Power thereof; their chief Design being to promote temporal Interest and worldly Advantage. They say indeed that the Clergy of the Church of *England* are paid for preaching, as they term it: The Clergy are, I acknowledge, in Possession of Livings or Ecclesiastical Preferment, in order to promote the Glory of God, and the Edification of the People; agreeable to the Laws of God, and the Constitution of
our

our Country. *Do ye not know*, says the Scripture, *that they who minister about holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple? And they who wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel: 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.* The *Methodists*, as well as the *Quakers*, when they reproach the Clergy with a Maintenance for Preaching, impeach the divine Wisdom of Almighty God; and consequently they are the most foolish and unwise People. The Laws of our Country, agreeable to the divine Injunctions, have appointed the Payment of Tithes for the Maintenance of the Clergy; which is a wise Contrivance and reasonable to be done. Because those, who are designed for Holy Orders, spend their Fortunes in their Education, in preparing themselves for the Work of the Ministry; which might be laid out to much greater temporal Advantage: And therefore it is fit and reasonable that they should be maintained, who labour in the Word and Doctrine; who are on Purpose set apart to promote the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind, and are forbidden to employ and involve themselves in worldly Affairs. -

The *Methodists*, I think, pretend that they imitate the Apostles in going from Place to Place in their Preaching; they cannot, I think, pretend to say that they imitate them in their Virtue and Goodness. The Apostles, in
preaching

preaching a new Religion to the World, were obliged to travel from Place to Place, in order to convert Mankind ; and therefore could not be in a settled State, and enjoy a fixed Charge and an established Cure. But now Mankind are converted to the Christian Religion, and the Gospel of our blessed Saviour is believed and professed in different Countries of the World, and established in a regular and orderly Manner ; it is therefore not only a disorderly and irregular Practice to wander from Place to Place through a Pretence to preach the Gospel, but a useless and unnecessary Thing ; a bold, daring, insolent, and unwarrantable Attempt ; having no Authority, either Civil or Ecclesiastical, to countenance such a Proceeding. It is a very base and vile Thing to go about either City or Country to raise a Mob, to disturb a Neighbourhood, to intrude into other Mens Cures, to alienate their Peoples Affections from them ; and to encourage Men to neglect the Duties of their Station, their necessary Business for the Support of themselves and Families. The Gospel of our Saviour, blessed be God, is regularly preached every Lord's-Day in most Parishes of these Kingdoms, besides upon other particular Occasions ; so that there is no Occasion for these methodical or rather immethodical Preachers.

There are too many Divisions among us already ; there can be no manner of Reason
to

to create more. It is unchristian, unmanly, unreasonable to make Differences, to raise Divisions, especially in religious Matters; when these Divisions are so prejudicial to Mankind, and are ready to devour us, to tear us in Pieces.

Notwithstanding the irregular and unwarrantable Conduct of these pretended *Methodists*, there are some People so weak and imprudent, as to suffer themselves to be deceived and imposed upon by them: What such People can mean I cannot perhaps so well determine. Novelty very likely prevails with some, with the lower Sort of People; for there is such a Spirit of Novelty among some of us, as there was among the *Athenians*; who, as St *Luke* acquaints us in the *Acts* of the Apostles, *spent their Time in nothing else, though a very bad Way of spending Time, but either to tell, or to hear some new Thing*: Acts xvii. 21. Others, who are imprudent, may pretend to carry their Views higher; and perhaps may say that they are attached to the Interest of these People, espouse their Cause, and follow their Way of Worship upon the Account of better Edification among them, than in the Church of *England*. If there are such People, they most grossly impose upon themselves: I appeal to all understanding and impartial People; *I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say*: 1 Cor. x. 15. Can there be better Prayers upon all Occasions, or even so good among Extemporists or those
that

that pray on a sudden without Premeditation, as in the Church of *England*? Prayers, that all with Comfort and Safety may religiously join in, to their Edification and spiritual Improvement. Let any religious and well-meaning Person, who is desirous to promote the Glory of God and the Salvation of Mankind, attend the Divine Service of the Church of *England*, (where there is no Idolatry, Superstition, nor Enthusiasm) and constantly join in this sacred Worship; and if he is not edified and spiritually improved thereby, I may safely venture to affirm that the Fault is in himself. I have not now Time to set forth the Beauty and Excellency of the Liturgy of the Church of *England*; it is too copious a Subject now to treat upon. As to the Preaching in the Church of *England*; there are now extant and in print such a great Variety of useful and excellent Discourses, tending so much to promote the Honour and Glory of God and the Edification of his People; that we may without any Flattery challenge any particular Church this Day in Christendom to shew the like. And as to the common and ordinary Way of Preaching; that, generally speaking, is useful and edifying, and Numbers of People might now be much better than they are, if they would take Care to practise what is every Lord's-Day delivered from the Pulpit.

Preaching

Preaching of late Years, blessed be God, is much improved in the Church of *England*.

Upon the Whole ; as weak and imprudent People may be deceived and imposed upon ; so I believe I may venture to affirm, that no Person of good Sense and Understanding, who knows what God and Religion mean, the Glory of the best of Beings and the greatest of Happiness, will ever forsake the Church of *England* to follow the *Methodists*, or any Sect or Party of People among us. If Salvation cannot be had in a sincere Communion with the Church of *England*, we shall be at a great Loss where to find it, or in what particular Church we can obtain it. It is necessary to hold Communion with a Society of Christian People ; to have Public Prayers and Preaching, to partake of the sacred Ordinances of the Gospel ; in order to a common and regular Way to Salvation : But then we should take Care what Party or Persuasion of Christian People we religiously join with, and with whom we hold Communion. To leave the Church of *England*, and join with the *Methodists*, is not agreeable to the Scripture to *walk circum-spectly* ; Eph. v. 15. it must be foolish and imprudent walking : Because there is no Wisdom, Reason, and good Conduct in such a Change ; but rather a great deal of Folly, Indiscretion, and imprudent Behaviour. This foolish and unwise Conduct is not only departing

parting from the most reasonable Worship of God, the best Way of serving Him : But it may lay the unhappy Foundation by too severe Austerities and extraordinary Fasting for Affliction to the Body by destroying its Health, which is so necessary to enable us to perform the several Duties of Life; and for Misery to the Mind, by reflecting, that if we feel not the Spirit we are deserted of it, by driving it to Despair, which hinders us from performing the Duties of Religion : Which have been the pernicious Consequences, as we have been informed, of this unreasonable Change.

There are several different Persuasions in the World, several Christian People that entertain different Sentiments concerning the Christian Religion ; and yet some of all Persuasions may be saved. This is a charitable Way of thinking, and agreeable to Scripture, which acquaints us, that *Charity believeth all Things, hopeth all Things* : 1 Cor. xiii. 7. Charity hopeth the best of all Persons : However, we must leave those that differ from us to God and their own Consciences. What the Scripture lays Stress upon, and holds necessary to Salvation, is a religious and good Life; living in the Fear of God, and keeping his Commandments; the Exercise of Faith, and the Practice of good Works : These are the essential Points of Religion. But as it is necessary to hold Communion

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with Christian People, *Acts* ii. 47. *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20. so we ought to be cautious and circumspect with whom we have Communion. We should make it our Business to enquire, what Profession of Christian People is most safe, most edifying, and whose Terms are most agreeable to Scripture; with these we should hold Communion. We may without Flattery and with Safety fix upon the Church of *England*, as the best Profession among Christian People. With the Church of *Rome* it is dangerous to hold Communion; because that Church is guilty of Idolatry and Superstition, and of such pernicious Errors as deface the Christian Religion, corrupt and spoil the true Spirit of it. As to the Dissenters that are among us: Of all the different Sects, the Quakers are of the lowest Class or Degree; they scarce deserve the Name of Christians, because they are not baptized, and because they have little or no Christian Edification among them.

When Fasts are enjoined by the King upon the Account of the present War, for the obtaining the Pardon of our Sins, for averting the Judgments of God from us, for imploring his Blessing and Assistance on the Arms of his Majesty, and for restoring and perpetuating Peace: Upon these good Accounts, which at this critical Juncture demand our strictest Attention and most religious Behaviour, these People called Quakers pay no
 Regard

Regard to the Royal Proclamation ; and instead of behaving in a serious and Christian Manner, as they ought to do, and the Affairs of our King and Country now call aloud upon us all to do what we can to obtain the divine Favour of Almighty God ; these obstinate People do not keep within the Bounds of common Decency, are rude and uncivil, and do not shew so much as the outward Appearance of a Sense of Religion upon their Minds.

As to the other Sects, though they make a much better religious Appearance than the former, yet their extempore Effusions are often filled with great Inconsistencies, with much Nonsense, with rude and profane Expressions ; and therefore are by no Means so edifying as the Church of *England* ; where there are the best of Prayers upon all Occasions, sound and good Preaching, very edifying and instructive : Where all may receive much religious Benefit and Advantage ; and where there are none of the spiritual Inconveniences abovementioned : for the Truth of which I can with Reason and a safe Conscience appeal to all Mankind. When I said above, that some of all Persuasions may be saved : there is some Hazard in running the spiritual Race : The Quaker runs a great Hazard in not being baptized with Water ; *Matt.* xxviii. 19. *Mark* xvi. 16. *John* iii. 5. *Acts* viii. 36, 37, 38. *Acts* x. 47, 48. The Pa-

pist in being guilty of Idolatry: *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.* Yet no doubt a most merciful God will make Allowance for Prejudice of Education and the Impositions of their spiritual Guides; where People are sincere, have an honest and good Heart, mean well, and lead a religious and good Life. It does not become us, in the Words of *Solomon, like mad Men, to throw about Firebrands, Arrows, and Death; Prov. xxvi. 18.* to curse, execrate, and devote to Destruction any of God's People. *Who art thou,* says the Scripture, *that judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth: Rom. xiv. 4.* It is our Duty to be charitable, it is God's Prerogative to judge Mankind: And therefore we must leave all those that differ from us to a most merciful God; who knows how to make Allowances in all Cases, and to render to every Man according to his Works.

God is our Master, to him we stand or fall; we are not to be judged by Man's Judgment, but by a most merciful and compassionate God. This is a great Happiness to us; because if we were to be judged by some Men, they would, upon the Account of our differing from them, be so cruel as to send us to perpetual Flames. But as we are to be judged by God, we shall have a most merciful and compassionate Judge.

As to that *Methodist*, who has lately appeared in this Neighbourhood; some are of
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Opinion that he is a Jesuit : As to that Point, I can neither affirm nor deny. It is not I think an usual Thing for a *Methodist* to act the Part of a Jesuit ; yet a Jesuit, at this critical Juncture, may very likely play the Part of a *Methodist*.

The *Methodists* seem to take their Rise from the Quakers by their Notions of being led by the Spirit ; by their Pretences to extraordinary Gifts, to inward Motions and Operations, to Inspiration, and to sensible Impulses made upon them. The *Methodists* make an outward Appearance of Sanctity, which is greatly taking with several Sorts of Persons ; but is very apt to deceive and impose upon the common People, who do not take Time to make due Enquiry, and to receive reasonable Information.

The *Methodists* pretend that those, that are regenerate among them and have the New Birth, as they term it, the true Christian Disposition that is necessary to Salvation, have great Raptures of Joy, sensible Manifestations of God's Presence with them ; extraordinary Workings, Operations that may be perceived, and distinguished as the true Marks of the divine Spirit upon them ; saving and experimental Knowledge of Christ Jesus, overpowering the Faculties of the Soul ; and are able to give an Account of their feeling at some Time or other such sudden Change

and Alteration within themselves, of feeling Christ within them.

“ What think you, says one of the *Methodists* to his Hearers, “ did *Naaman* feel when “ he was cured of his Leprosy? Did the “ Woman feel Virtue coming out of Jesus “ Christ, when she touched the Hem of his “ Garment, and was cured of her bloody “ Issue? So surely mayst thou feel, O Believer, when Christ Jesus dwelleth in thy “ Heart*.” As these Passages seem to support the inward Feelings of Grace, so I shall take Notice of them. As to the Case of *Naaman*: *Naaman went down, and dipped himself seven Times in Jordan, according to the saying of the Man of God; and his Flesh came again like unto the Flesh of a little Child, and he was clean*: 2 Kings v. 14. *Naaman* perceived by the Change of his Flesh, which was fresh and pure, that he was cured of his Leprosy; and upon the Account of this surprising Cure, he was convinced and acknowledged that the God of *Israel* is the only true God:—*And he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the Earth but in Israel*: ver. 15. His own Reason and Judgment enforced this Truth upon him. Here is no Intimation of any inward religious Feeling, of any divine Operations working within *Naaman*; whatever Change was wrought in his Mind and Disposition, was effected by the outward Ope-

* *Whitefield's Sermon. What think ye, &c.* p. 22.

ration,

ration, by the wonderful Work of the Cure, without any inward Feeling of Grace. I am surpris'd that this Passage of Scripture is produced as an Instance to convince Christian People, that they may perceive and feel, when Jesus Christ dwelleth in their Heart; a Passage which has no Relation to this Purpose. As to the Woman, whose bloody Issue was healed: *She came behind our Saviour, and touched the Border of his Garment; and immediately her Issue of Blood stanch'd: Luke viii. 43, 44.* There was Virtue in our blessed Saviour to heal this Woman, for he told his Disciples, *I perceive that Virtue is gone out of me: ver. 46.* But there is no Mention nor Intimation of any inward religious Feeling in her. She knew that she was healed, because, as St Mark expresses it, *the Fountain of her Blood was dried up; and she felt in her Body that she was healed of that Plague: Mark. v. 29.* She felt the healing Virtue of our Saviour to cure her Body; but nothing is here said to make us believe that she had any inward religious Feeling of Grace in her Heart. This Passage is as little to the Purpose as the former.

“ I know indeed, says he, the Men of this Generation deny there is any such Thing as feeling Christ within them; but alas! to what a dreadful Condition would such reduce us, even to the State of abandoned Heathens; *Who*, St Paul tells us, *were past feeling:*

Eph. iv. 19. The Heathen, by a long Course of Sin, had so blinded their Understanding, and reduced themselves to such a desperate Degree of Hardness and Insensibility, that they were become past feeling, having no Sense of Sin and the Danger of it; and therefore, in the Words of the Apostle, *had given themselves over unto Lasciviousness, to work all Uncleanness with Greediness* * :” Eph. iv. 19. Now because several among Christian People deny there is any such Thing as feeling Christ within them, according to the Opinion of the *Methodists*; therefore they have reduced themselves, and all of the same Sentiments, to the most dreadful Condition, even to the State of abandoned Heathens; *Who*, upon the Account of their great Wickedness and Debauchery, *were past feeling*. I think this Writer might have had better Manners, and more Christian Charity, than to rank those that differ from him among the worst of Men, the abandoned Heathen; especially upon the Account of a Matter of mere Speculation. The *Methodists* seem to place Religion in Perturbations of Mind, extraordinary Flights, Ravishment of the Spirit, enthusiastical Possessions of God, and supernatural Impulses; and to make it consist in inexplicable inward Feelings and Emotions, setting them as Standards to measure the spiritual State and Condition of Christian People by.

* *Whitefield's Sermon. What think ye of Christ?* p. 21.

Every ignorant, confident, and enthusiastical Person may make these Pretensions, and boldly assert the Truth of them; but we are at Liberty to suspend our Belief, and not to give Credit to them. As every Tree is known by its Fruit; so the true inward Disposition of every Person is known by his outward Behaviour and Conversation; without any violent Motions or extraordinary Raptures. If we are sincerely disposed out of a Principle of Conscience to perform the divine Will of Almighty God; if we are determined to do our Duty in Obedience to the Commands of Heaven, let whatever Evils happen to us; if we are led to repent of our Sins, to exercise Faith, and to practise good Works; we are as sure that we are under the Conduct of God's good Spirit, are Sons of God, and Heirs of Salvation; as if a Voice from Heaven, which is of greater Consequence in this Affair than those pretended sensible Manifestations of the divine Favour, should make these divine Declarations to us. This important Affair the Scripture assures us of: *Blessed are the Pure in Heart; for they shall see God: Matt. v. 8. If ye know these Things, happy are ye if ye do them: John xiii. 17. And if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ: Rom. viii. 17. Christ became the Author of eternal Salvation unto unto all them that obey him: Heb. v. 9. If these Things be in you and abound, the divine Graces*
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of the Gospel and not extraordinary Raptures and violent Motions within them, *they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For so an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 Pet. i. 8, 11.* But without a religious Conversation, Purity of Life and Manners; all the inward Heat and Fervour imaginable, all the violent Motions and extraordinary Flights and Raptures, will signify nothing. The Goodness of our State and Condition must be judged by the Goodness of our Life and Conversation; and not by sudden Impulses, extraordinary Motions, and immediate Inspirations; which Enthusiasts pretend to, and prescribe as necessary Ingredients for a salvable State. Whosoever repents, believes, and obeys the Gospel of our blessed Saviour, shall be saved: *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: Mark xvi. 16.* To this indeed the Spirit bears Witness, but it is in a rational Way; by bearing Witness to the Sincerity of our Actions, and giving us good Hope and Ability to conclude, for the Sake of Christ Jesus, that we are in a State of Salvation; by obeying the Gospel, by leading a religious and good Life, by living in the Fear of God, and taking Care to keep his Commandments. Men may pretend that they have the Spirit within them; when there is nothing but the Working of their own Passions,

sions, and the Motion of their own vain and heated Imaginations. We do not find that the Scripture directs us to any inward Motions of our own Breasts, or to any sensible Operations within us; to know whether we are God's Children, and Heirs of Salvation: But the Scripture to this Purpose directs us to the religious Effects of our Christian Calling; to Faith and Practice. *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved: Rom. x. 9. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth Righteousness is born of him: 1 John ii. 29.* This is the sacred Strain of the whole Scripture. And this seems very reasonable, because there are several religious and good People, who mean well, who are sincere, who carefully serve God, and do Good to Mankind; that have not these inward Feelings, these extraordinary Motions and Operations in their Breasts. These are often owing to a strong Constitution, to Art and Contrivance, to Design and Knavery, to Pride and Conceit, to a vain and heated Imagination; which Things religious and well-meaning People have no Business to concern themselves with. They have that solid Goodness, which is greatly to be preferred before these vain Amusements. Almighty God doth not make himself known to Men by inward and extraordinary Manifestations, or by sensible Operations of his Spirit

Spirit upon their Minds, except in establishing a new Revelation of his Will : But a new Revelation of God's Will, the *Methodists*, I think, do not pretend do ; and therefore there is no Proof of any inward Manifestation of God's Presence with them ; there is nothing but their own vain and bold Assertions. As to a sensible Operation of the Spirit in Regeneration or New Birth, as is pretended, this the Scripture seems to discountenance : *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit : John iii. 8.* We know that we are in the right Way to please Almighty God, and gain his divine Favour, by being religiously disposed to perform his divine Commands, by a real Conformity of our Will to the Will of God ; which is a sure Pledge, a sure Mark of our being born of the Spirit, of being in a State of Salvation : But from whence this religious Disposition cometh, by the Manner that it affects us, we cannot tell. We are as much at a Loss about these inward Workings, these spiritual Operations, as we are about the Mystery of the Wind, or the Current of the Air : We know as little about these inward Motions, as we know the Cause of the Wind's blowing, the Reason of its ceasing, and what becomes of it after it ceaseth. We hear indeed the Wind to blow, and perceive its strange and surprising

surprising Effects; but we cannot unfold its Nature, nor declare its Beginning nor its End. In like Manner we evidently perceive the outward Operations of the Spirit, and its influencing Effects upon our Minds; but how or in what manner it inwardly works, and operates within us, we know no more than we can tell whence the Wind cometh, and whither it goeth. This Mystery is hidden from Men, though they themselves are Subjects of it. We can know our State and Condition, in relation to another Life, only by the Rule of God's holy Word; by which we shall be judged hereafter; and not by any inward Feelings or extraordinary Operations upon the Mind. The Scripture in several Places acquaints us, that all religious and good People are in Favour with God; and that if they continue *faithful unto Death, they shall receive*, according to the divine Promise, *a Crown of Life*; Rev. ii. 10. that they shall be amply recompensed for their faithful Services to him. This Assurance is not owing to any extraordinary Influence of the Spirit upon the Minds of Men, but is the ordinary Effect of the Word of God upon serious and religious Reflection, which comforts and supports Mankind through the troublesome Passage of this Life to another and better State. A religious and good Man is assured of God's Favour and holy Spirit by the Scriptures, by the Word of God; and therefore there is no Occasion for
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any inward and spiritual Feelings, as Marks of true Regeneration and New Birth, as is pretended, or of being in a salvable State. Men are brought to have Regard to God and the common Duties of Religion by outward Means, and not by inward Workings and sensible Operations; which are good Reasons to prove, that there is no Occasion for these inward and sensible Operations. Almighty God has various Ways to work upon Men by outward Means; sometimes he visits them with Sicknefs and Diseases, the Troubles and Calamities of the Body; to bring them to a Sense of themselves; to improve, rectify, and make better their Minds; to induce them to take into serious Consideration the great Affairs of another and better Life. At other Times he powerfully works upon them by the outward Ministry of his Word, affecting their Hearts either by reading of the Scriptures themselves, thereby bringing them to serious and considerate Reflection, or by having the Scripture read and preached unto them, by the sacred Ordinances of Religion, by good and edifying Discourse. This is not only the common and ordinary Method of God's dealing with Mankind, but if seriously considered is the most effectual to the Purpose. The Scripture acquaints us that *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God*: Rom. x. 17. The Word of God is the Foundation for religious Hearing, and this religious

religious Hearing is the Foundation for Faith, both for Belief and Practice: People must hear, before they can believe; and before they can hear the divine Will of God, know or understand it, they must have his divine Word preached or made known unto them. The Word of God therefore is the outward Means, and if that is duly attended to, it is effectual to all the Purposes of Religion. If this is the Case, as most certainly it is, then there is no Occasion for any inward and sensible Operations; either to teach us our Duty, or to give us unusual and extraordinary inward Feelings as Signs of God's Favour, and of the Goodness of our spiritual State and Condition. The Word of God was designed for our Guide, to conduct us in the right Way, and to assure us of the divine Favour, and of a Blessing and happy State hereafter, upon the Conditions of the Gospel; upon Faith, Repentance, Obedience, and a good Life. We may therefore truly say to ourselves in the Words of the *Psalmist*, *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Path*: *Psalm*. cxix. 105. We need no other Light, nor Guide, nor Director in the great Concerns of our Duty and Happiness, but the Word of God; it is a sure Comfort upon all Occasions and upon all Accounts; it was given on Purpose to prevent all manner of Errors and Mistakes whatsoever. *Out of Heaven he made thee to hear his Voice*, said *Moses* to the

the Israelites, *that he might instruct thee*: Deut. iv. 36. *All Scripture*, says St Paul to Timothy, *is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*: *That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works*: 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Sometimes again Almighty God works upon Men by his outward Favours and Mercies, by the Blessings he is graciously pleased to confer upon them. And at other Times he terrifies Mankind by his Judgments, such as Plague, Pestilence, and Famine; the Sword, Fire, and Earthquakes. These are the Means which divine Providence makes use of for the Benefit of Mankind, to bring them to their Duty, and to prepare them for Happiness; but if these outward Means will not prevail with Men to regard their Duty, there will be no inward Operations upon their Minds either to teach and instruct them, or to give them Assurance of the Favour of God, and of the Happiness of a future State. Almighty God does not work upon Men in an extraordinary manner by a Voice from Heaven, or manifest himself to them by sensible Operations or unusual Appearances, or speaks inwardly to their Minds and directs them what to do; except in extraordinary Cases, either in making a new Revelation of his Will, or in further establishing that which was made. And therefore the outward Means of Religion in
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ordinary Cases are sufficient for all the Purposes of Duty and Happiness, which is the Case now before us. It has been, I believe, often observed, but particularly upon the Account of the *Methodists*, that the Apostles wrought Miracles, as an Evidence that what they delivered they spoke from God, and delivered by his Appointment. But the *Methodists*, as one observes*, have no Proof to offer for their inward Manifestations; unless their own confident Assertions may be admitted as such. To which Observation the *Arch-Methodist* replies†, “ that it is a greater Miracle to raise dead Souls to a spiritual Life, than to raise dead Bodies to a natural Life;” and for the Truth of this he appeals to Experience. But in the former Case there is no Certainty, nor any Dependence, nor any Miracle; in the latter, to raise a dead Body to Life is a visible Effect of divine Power, a manifest Miracle, and a supernatural Effect that may certainly be depended upon. Let this *Methodist* raise a dead Body to a natural Life, which he looks upon as the less Miracle; and then there may be Reason to believe that he has raised dead Souls to a spiritual Life, which he esteems the greater Miracle. Our blessed Saviour, for the Truth of his Mission, does not appeal to the inward Effects which he wrought upon

* Dr Stebbing's Sermon, p. 10.

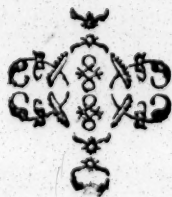
† *Whitefield's* 4th Journal, p. 19.

Mens Souls; but appeals to his outward Operations, to the Miracles which he wrought in the Sight of Men, of which they were evident Judges. *The Works*, says he, *which the Father hath given me to finish, the same Works that I do, bear Witness of me that the Father hath sent me*: John v. 36. Miracles are Appeals to the outward Senses, are visible Operations, done openly and in the Sight of the World, beyond the Powers of Nature; not Application to inward Effects, which are pretended to be wrought upon the Minds of Men.

Let the *Methodists* therefore never pretend to work Miracles; nor let any religious and well-meaning Persons follow such vain and deluded People; who are not only given to change, but design to deceive and impose upon others. Regard not their proud and confident Boastings, their pretended extraordinary inward Feelings and Raptures; but use your best Endeavours to *crucify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*, Gal. v. 24. to *grow in Grace*, 2 Pet. iii. 18. to improve in the Divine and Christian Life; to have a Faith which worketh by Love; for this religious Method, and the Continuance in it, is a sure Mark of the divine Spirit upon you, of the Favour and Love of God; and of your being in a State of Salvation. Let us all therefore live a just, chaste, and charitable Life in the Fear of God, and take Care to keep his Commandments. Let us sincerely, out
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of an honest and good Heart, serve God in the use of his Holy Ordinances; constantly attend the Public Service of the Church, religiously observe the Lord's-Day, be regular in our Private Devotions every Morning and Evening, and receive the Holy Sacrament whenever it is provided for us. Let us hold Religious Communion with the Church of *England*; be temperate and sober ourselves; promote the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind; reform and amend, lead a religious and good Life, and increase in the spiritual Graces of the Gospel: And when we depart this Life, we shall be received with that divine *Euge; Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord;* Matt. xxv. 23.

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